

# TODAY IN SYRIA AND PALESTINE



WILLIAM ELLEROY CURTIS



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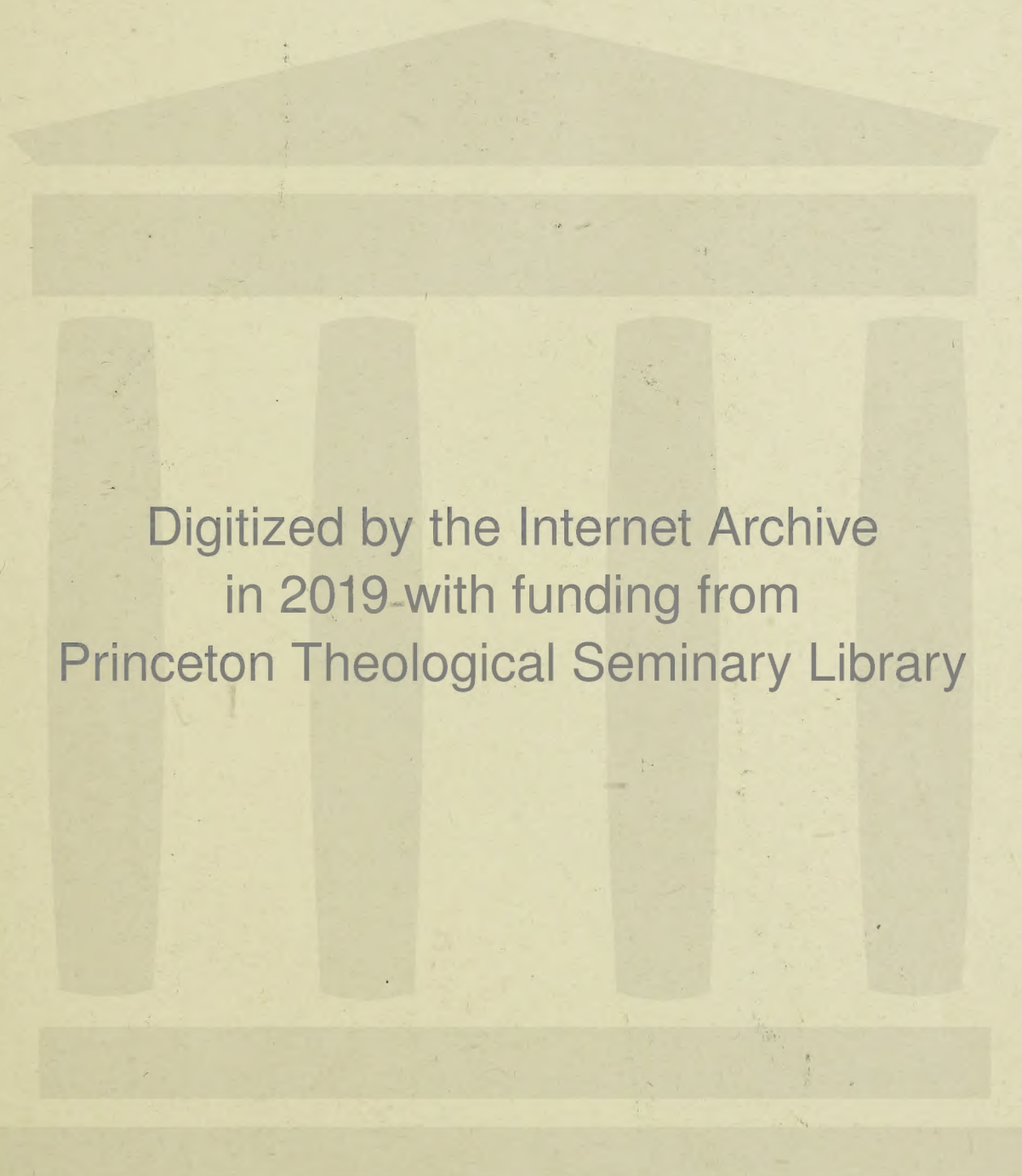












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# To-day in Syria and Palestine

BY

WILLIAM ELEROY CURTIS

AUTHOR OF "THE TURK AND HIS LOST PROVINCES," "THE TRUE THOMAS  
JEFFERSON," "THE TRUE ABRAHAM LINCOLN," ETC.

Illustrations from Kodak Photographs by  
Elsie Evans Curtis



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TO  
ELROY CURTIS







## PREFACE

A conscientious effort is made in this volume to describe the Holy Land, and the historical scenes of Syria as they appear to-day to the eyes of a newspaper reporter. It is not intended for theologians, but for ordinary people; and was prepared for publication to gratify many readers of *The Chicago Record-Herald*, who asked that the letters which appeared in its columns in the spring of 1901 might be preserved in permanent form. In company with Mr. and Mrs. William H. Baldwin of Washington, D. C., and my own family, I spent several weeks visiting the scenes identified with the life of our Savior, and the homes and haunts of the Patriarchs and Prophets of Scripture times. Such an experience brings them closer to you; gives them a vitality they do not have in books; and that, of course, is the greatest benefit of travel; and let me here record my humble testimony to the truth of the Scriptures. A journey through Palestine destroys many illusions, and disturbs one's confidence in mankind, and especially in many of the professional teachers of Christianity, but it confirms the faith of conscientious and thoughtful readers in the Bible and its teachings; for every spot fully described in its pages can be immediately and distinctly identified. This is an extraordinary fact. I know of no other book of which the same can be said.

The photographs of Jericho, the House of Pilate, the Dead Sea, Rasheed, "Ships of the Desert," "The East and West," and "A Bit of Bethany" were made by



Mr. Baldwin; the others by my daughter, Elsie Evans Curtis, who has been the faithful companion of my travels since she was a child.

The newspaper letters of which the book is composed were dictated to my son, Elroy Curtis, sometimes under most inconvenient surroundings. During the entire journey we wrote an average of twenty-five hundred words a day, wherever we could find a place to put a typewriter—often surrounded by groups of astonished natives. His patience, fidelity and skill made this possible, and therefore to him the book is dedicated.

WILLIAM E. CURTIS.



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**I**

**Highways to the Holy Land;  
or Cruising on the Coast of  
Asia Minor**







# To-day in Syria and Palestine

## I

### HIGHWAYS TO THE HOLY LAND; OR, CRUISING ON THE COAST OF ASIA MINOR

There are several ways of reaching Constantinople and the Holy Land. You can go from Vienna via the Balkan States by railway, with through cars four days from Paris. There is another line via Bukharest to Constanze on the Black Sea, with a steamer running down to Constantinople from the latter port in a single night. There is a line of steamers from Boston to Egypt and several lines from England and the Atlantic and Mediterranean ports of Europe to Alexandria, Port Said, Smyrna, and Constantinople. Between Constantinople and Egypt commerce is carried on by several lines of coasters.

The Russian steamers are said to be the best. They run from Odessa and other Black Sea ports to Egypt, and their principal cargoes are pilgrims for Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, and other sacred places of Palestine, but they also carry down a good deal of flour, petroleum, and lumber, and bring back carpets, wool, cotton, and other merchandise. A French line makes circuitous trips from Marseilles via Greece. The Austrian Lloyd steamers start at Trieste, touch the ports of the Adriatic and make a general circuit of the Ægean Sea. An Italian company sends steamers regularly from Genoa, calling at Naples, Brindisi, and



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Athens and visiting all of the ports on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. The Greeks have an excellent fleet of merchantmen engaged in the same trade, and an English line, under the management of the Khedival Company, is very popular with Britons. They think it is the best. Generally speaking, therefore, one can get a steamer almost every day, or at least three or four a week, touching the principal ports on the coast of Syria. Nearly all the steamers are comfortable. The food is good, the cabins are clean, the rates of fare are reasonable, and the captains and other officers usually speak three or four different languages.

During the entire year, except in the windy months, the cruise is delightful. The steamers stop for several hours at each of the ports, long enough for passengers to go ashore and see all there is to be seen, so that merely by making the cruise, without attempting to penetrate the interior, one can get a pretty fair idea of the country. Several short railways extend from Smyrna, Beirut, Jaffa, and other ports to the interior, all of them owned and controlled by foreigners, under concessions from the Ottoman Empire. Others are proposed. A concession has been granted by the sultan to a German company—with great reluctance, however, and under diplomatic pressure from Kaiser William, his only friend in Europe—for a line to Bagdad, which will make accessible to tourists one of the most fascinating parts of the East, now beyond reach unless travelers are willing and able to endure a long, tedious journey on camels over the desert.

Damascus, Jerusalem, Ephesus, and Tarsus, the birthplace of Paul, can already be reached by rail, and it will soon be possible to go by train to Mount



Ararat. Since 1896 the Russians have been building a line south from Tiflis, and have already reached Kara, a strongly fortified city on the Turkish frontier. Kara is near the foot of Mount Ararat, 5,689 feet above the sea level. The railroad is chiefly important for strategic purposes, but the people in the interior raise a great deal of wool, and, having facilities for reaching the market, will no doubt extend their enterprises.

Traveling in the East is not so comfortable as in more civilized countries. There is always a good deal of hardship and a lack of comforts as well as luxuries, and people who go to Turkey, Asia Minor, and Palestine must expect to put up with inconveniences, discomforts, and annoyances that would not be tolerated at home. Occasionally you find a good hotel, but the most of them are bad. The Germans are going in rapidly, which is a most favorable sign of promise, for they always make life more endurable to foreigners—and where are not the Germans going? We hear of their enterprise and aggressiveness in Australia and in South Africa; they are occupying every point of vantage in China and the East Indies, while in South America they are monopolizing the retail as well as the export trade. In Syria, and the Holy Land, and it is a cause of gratitude, they are buying up the old hotels and starting new ones, and are altogether the hope of the country. If it is ever to be redeemed, they will do the work.

Germans have advantages on Turkish territory which are not enjoyed by other foreigners, because of the supposed friendly relations between the kaiser and the sultan. How deep those relations are it is difficult to determine, but they are being utilized in a practical manner in every direction. On the steamer one



day a German gentleman remarked that "the sultan says that the kaiser is his best friend, but we haven't heard what the kaiser has to say." There is a great deal of jealousy on the part of the Russians. They have terrorized Turkey and have compelled the sultan to respect their subjects by threats of reprisal. A Russian subject has been safe in the Ottoman Empire since the war of 1877-78, but it is fear and not love or respect that gives him an advantage. There has always been a feeling that every Russian who enters Turkey comes as an enemy, but the Germans are received as friends.

The most disagreeable feature of the country is the filth. If cleanliness is next to godliness, the present population of Palestine and Syria haven't the slightest chance of Paradise. The houses as well as the streets are almost intolerable. Oriental magnificence is much to be admired, but the dirt and bad smells that surround it modify the enjoyment. There are, however, a few clean cities which it is a pleasure to enter.

Leaving Constantinople in the afternoon we sail down the Sea of Marmora, and through the Dardanelles. The plain of Troy, the site of the old city of Priam, the home of the beautiful Helen, whose dark eyes set the whole world a-fighting, lies near the mouth of the Hellespont, about three miles from the Aegean Sea, and a considerable part of the ruins and the country around belongs to Mr. Calvert, the United States consul at the neighboring town of Dardanelles. He has an estate of five hundred or six hundred acres well irrigated, and under a high state of cultivation, and his home is the grateful headquarters of the archeologists who come to dig among the ruins. From the threshold one can see where Achilles chased Hector



around the walls of the city, where the wooden horse was played off upon the Trojans by the cunning Greeks, and where Ajax did his best fighting. The topographical features of the country have considerably changed during the three thousand years since the Trojan War. The ancient city is buried deep beneath the soil, the [ranges of hills have been rounded off, ravines have been filled up, and the rivers have changed their courses, but the general outline of the country can easily be traced from the description in Homer's great poem.

The excavations made by Dr. Schliemann and by Frank Calvert show that there are strata of cities, one upon another, under fifty feet of rubbish and soil and sand. The first city was built upon the bed rock, and there is no doubt that its population was Aryan, because of the symbols found upon the pottery. The second settlement, whose foundations rested upon the ruins of the first, according to Schliemann, was built by the Trojans, and the ruins show that the town was destroyed by a fearful conflagration. The walls bear marks of having been exposed to intense heat; melted lead and copper are found in the ashes, and among the debris were charred human bones, skeletons with breast-plates, and helmets, and, most wonderful of all, "the treasures of Priam," whose intrinsic value is very great and whose archeological value is even greater. They are supposed to have been the hoarded valuables of the king, and to have escaped destruction at the time his palace was destroyed. They consist of dishes of gold, silver and electrum, caldrons and other utensils of copper, bracelets, rings, chains and ornaments of gold; battle-axes, swords, spear heads, and other weapons of copper, and many various articles of metal



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which were fused together by the great heat that occurred at the destruction of the city.

It seems extraordinary that the successors to the city that lies underneath should not have discovered these deposits, because they built their houses immediately over them. From the style of construction, the implements, weapons, utensils, and other articles that are found in the ruins, Dr. Schliemann believes that the third settlement was composed of Greeks, probably part of Agememnon's army, who took possession and continued to live there. The earth that concealed this ruin has been occupied for several hundred years by Turkish shepherds and farmers, who have been growing vegetables and feeding sheep upon the romantic spot. According to the calculations of the archeologists, Troy was a much smaller city than students generally suppose. The ruins will not justify a larger estimate than five thousand population. It is also determined that the date of the Trojan War and the fall of Troy was about 1270 B. C.

Frank Calvert, the United States consul, is an accomplished archeologist as well as an enterprising business man, and is recognized as an authority upon all of these subjects. His family has been there more than half a century. His elder brother was consul of the United States for thirty years, and he has served in that capacity for nearly twenty-five years. Two of his daughters have married Americans, archeologists, who went there to make excavations, and are now living in the United States.

Lying in the channel at the town of Dardanelles is a fleet of black hulks with stern-looking cannon protruding from the port holes, but the ships are not so formidable as they look. It is the famous navy of



Turkey—famous for having been unable to get any farther than their present anchorage during the recent war with Greece. The Grecian fleet appeared at the mouth of the Hellespont and challenged the Turks to come out for a sea fight. They could not go into the strait because it is lined from end to end with fortifications and Krupp guns, and no vessel that floats could endure the bombardment that would salute it if it attempted to force the passage. But they dared the sultan's seamen to come out where the coast is clear, and the sultan gave the order. The minister of marine told him that his ships were all right, and it would be interesting to know how he afterward crawled out of the scrape, because they could not get any farther than the Dardanelles. The boilers leaked, the engines broke down, the steering gear wouldn't work, and not one of the them dare venture to sea, even if it could have made the steam necessary. Nor were they able to get back to Constantinople, but had to cast anchor where they lie, and nobody is able to move them. Of course they might be towed up by tugs and other steamers, but it would scarcely pay. Everybody knows the facts except the sultan, and how they were concealed from him is a miracle. He has another fleet in a similar condition lying in the Golden Horn. Not one of his vessels is in fighting shape, although there are twenty or thirty upon the active list of the Turkish navy. It is a question whether the tremendous fortifications which line both sides of the Bosphorus and the Hellespont are in any better order, even though most of the guns are modern and an enormous amount of money has been expended in reconstructing and arming them in recent years in order to make Constantinople impregnable.

The steamer threads its way through the thickly settled islands of the Ægean Sea, hallowed by the mythology of the ancients and by associations with profane and sacred history. We pass Mitylene, the island which the French seized in 1901 to hold as a hostage until the sultan paid a firm of Paris contractors for building some docks at Salonica, and coast along under a picturesque mountain range until we arrive at Smyrna, a lovely place of semi-tropical climate, so clean as to furnish a striking contrast with Constantinople. The streets are well paved; the houses are newly painted, the gardens are alluring, the people are attractive in appearance, and everything seems prosperous and in good repair.

Smyrna is the smartest town in Turkey so far as trade is concerned. It does a bigger business than Constantinople. It is the headquarters of the wool and of the rug and carpet trade. The custom there is the same in Constantinople. Turkish and Persian rugs are sold only in quantity by the bale at the custom house at auction, and none of the bidders know what they are buying until they have paid the price and the duty and open the package. Sometimes they are badly swindled. At other times they make good bargains, and as a rule the average runs evenly. Not even a Turkish speculator will pay a high price for goods he cannot examine, and as a consequence the people who make the rugs have to suffer in low wages. Between four and five thousand men, women, and children are engaged in manufacturing carpet rugs within the city of Smyrna, and about eighteen thousand within the district. Their average earnings, regulated by their skill and industry, are less than 1 franc (20 cents) a day, and many of them are genuine artists.



The best rugs are not made in Smyrna. A few fine ones are produced there, but as a rule only the cheapest quality are made because they are more in demand in the European and American markets. Nearly all the rugs are woven in the households and all the members of the family work at them, father, mother, and children, relieving one another at the same old-fashioned looms.

Smyrna is also the market for rugs from all parts of Asia Minor, and caravans of camels come in daily bringing bales from the interior six and eight hundred miles. Sometimes the caravans are four and five months on the journey. The prices for rugs there seem very low, because there is no local demand, but after you have paid the packing and transportation charges, the insurance and the duties in New York, the price mounts up to about what you have to pay in New York or Chicago, and you can make better selections there. Several American houses have buyers there, picking up the best goods in the market, which are now going to America instead of to France and England, as formerly.

Smyrna is also the headquarters of the Turkish wool trade; it is the greatest fig market in the world, and exports more licorice than any other town. There is a fine harbor and a splendid quay, two and one-half miles long, in the form of a crescent, built by an English company. The hotels, the principal business houses and the residences of the wealthy people face the bay. Many rich foreign merchants live there—Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Germans. There is also a large Jewish population, who, with the Greeks, control the retail trade. The bazaars are fascinating to shoppers, being filled with curious oriental goods,

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although we are cautioned by those more familiar with the facts than ourselves that most of the tinsel and cheap jewelry, the embroidered jackets, and fierce looking weapons are made in Germany and France, and that we must not buy anything new in the Smyrna bazaars as genuine products of the country. The second-hand stores, however, are filled with native articles of which there is no doubt. Hammered silver is particularly cheap, and the gold and silk embroideries are much finer and cheaper than they can be bought anywhere else except in Damascus, which is due to the lack of demand.

The bazaars of Smyrna, like those of Constantinople, are rows of small shops or booths fronting upon narrow passageways, roofed over to keep out the rain, and it is quite alarming to strangers to come squarely up against a caravan of soft-footed camels, which move as silently as the fates and are quite upon you before you are aware of it. They stride through the narrow alleys of the bazaars chewing their cud with the greatest indifference. Their loads bump against the sides of the houses and often tear down goods that are hanging outside the shop doors. The camels are fastened together by ropes and led by an old Arab upon a donkey, which looks very odd and diminutive beside the monstrous beasts.

Smyrna is a very old city and has always been famous for its commerce and wealth. It was notable in the earliest history of Christianity and was the seat of one of the seven churches of Asia referred to by St. John in the Revelation.

Twenty-four miles in the interior, reached by a railway in two hours, are the ruins of the once splendid City of Ephesus, one of the most populous, powerful,







GATEWAY OF THE TEMPLE OF DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS.



and cultured communities of ancient times. The chief object of interest there now is the ruins of the Temple of Diana—Diana of the Ephesians—one of the largest and most magnificent structures ever erected by human hands, grander and more extensive than the temples upon the Acropolis at Athens, or the pagan shrines in Rome. There was never anything to compare with it except the Temples of the Sun at Baalbek. The ruins have been excavated with great skill by J. T. Wood, an English archeologist, who published the results of his discoveries in 1877. Ephesus was one of the chief cities in Greek mythology, next in importance to Athens for learning and art, and after Jerusalem, the holiest of Christian cities. To-day it is a small village, inhabited only by the families of shepherds, who follow their flocks upon the neighboring hillsides.

The little, rocky island of Samos is an object of great interest to the lovers of human liberty, and is famous for other reasons—for its climate and its natural beauties. It is as beautiful as Capri in the Bay of Naples, and the inhabitants claim that people who go there never die. At least we were not able to find a cemetery. At Samos it is always June, and the veracious natives will assure you with sober faces that the temperature is never too hot and never too cold, but always just exactly as everybody wants it. The cigarettes of Samos are the best in the market. The tobacco is grown on the sunny slopes of the rocky hills, but the supply is limited, and most of the cigarettes are sent to special dealers in London, Paris, and other European capitals for the consumption of the royal families, the nobility, and the high-class clubs and hotels. Russia is the largest market. The wines

of Samos are also celebrated, but the area in vineyards is small, and, like the tobacco, the entire yield is sold to special buyers and never reaches the general market. The population is 54,000—all Greeks, with the exception of seventy-seven Turkish officials. Vathy, the capital and commercial metropolis, has 6,000 people.

In the classic period Samos was a power in the world—the seat of a famous university, a center of culture, manners, art, and sciences, and the inhabitants were renowned for their scholarship. Vathy was the birthplace of Pythagoras, and has produced many other famous men. When Greece was conquered by the Turks four hundred years ago, Samos was forced to accept the authority of the sultan, but it was always restless, and revolutions were continuous. Since 1826, the epoch of Greek liberty, the people have been semi-independent, paying an annual tribute of \$10,000 to the sultan and accepting the authority of a governor-general, or prince-regent, as they call him, of the sultan's selection, although according to the treaty he must be a Greek and a member of the Orthodox Greek faith. The recent governor, Michele Gregoriadis, was very unpopular, and his appointment was considered an evasion of the spirit of the treaty, for, although he was of Greek ancestry, he was born in the Turkish province of Trebizond, educated at the court of the sultan at Constantinople, and consequently was a thorough Turk, with little or no sympathy with the people of Samos and much more with their enemies. The people demanded a change and the selection of a native of Samos, but were not gratified, although the new governor, Mavroyeni Bey, is a liberal man, a Greek by birth, a member of the Greek Orthodox Church, and lived at Washington for ten years as the



Turkish minister. His father was the private physician of the sultan of Turkey for many years and managed to perform his delicate duties at the Yildiz Kiosk and in the harem without losing the confidence or exciting the suspicion of his imperial master, who is without doubt the most difficult man to please in all the earth.

The sultan has been very generous with the people of Samos, however, having returned their annual tribute to be added to the building fund of the new house of parliament, which is in the course of construction and nearly completed, at a cost of \$50,000. A new cathedral of the Greek church, which will cost the same amount, is also building in a lot adjoining the capitol grounds, and is to be paid for from the public treasury and private contribution. In the legislative chamber are life-size portraits of the leaders of the revolution against Turkey, which lasted eight years and resulted in the present system of autonomy. The people have always been remarkable for their love of liberty, their patriotism, and their loyalty to the Orthodox Greek Church.

Vathy is the cleanest town we have seen since we left Norway—so neat that you could eat your dinner off the street pavement anywhere and not swallow half as much dirt as you would under ordinary circumstances at the hotels of other Turkish towns. The houses are in perfect repair and tastefully painted. Over each doorway is a wreath of leaves, a bunch of small vegetables or a wisp of wheat or oats, a tribute offered to the God of Plenty at the beginning of the season. The same custom prevails in Norway, and it is a pretty one, an acknowledgement that the prosperity of the people does not depend entirely upon the

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fertility of the soil or their own labor, but upon the benevolence of a higher power. There are no mosques in Vathy, but several neatly-kept Greek churches. The schoolhouses are large and airy. An academy, at which the higher branches are taught, with a gymnasium beside it, is an object of great pride among the people, who have also a public library and a museum, containing a small collection of antiquities and objects of natural history, intelligently classified and well kept. Vathy is altogether a most charming town and a most grateful place to visit for one who has been living in the filth and the confusion of Constantinople and other Turkish communities.

About twenty miles away is the Island of Patmos, to which John, the beloved apostle, was banished by the Roman Emperor Domitian, A. D. 94, and where he had the vision of the Apocalypse.

"I, John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the knowledge and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

"I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet,

"Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, and what thou seest write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia, unto Ephesus and unto Smyrna," etc.

Patmos is a much smaller island than Samos, only twenty-eight miles in circumference, and having but 4,000 population—all Greeks, but under Turkish domination. A cave in which St. John is said to have lived and to have written the book of Revelation is now a Greek chapel, where numerous lamps are kept con-



tinually burning. It is a resort for pilgrims—thousands coming every year, chiefly from Russia, to pray, particular efficacy being attributed to prayers offered at that altar. From these pilgrims much of the revenues of the island come. Religious shrines are the most profitable of all enterprises in the East, but the regular vocation of the people of Patmos is in tending vineyards, making wine, and herding sheep.

Tarsus, the birthplace of St. Paul, is on the main coast of Asia Minor, and can be reached by a little narrow-gauge railway from the port of Mersina. As the steamers usually lie there all day, passengers have an opportunity to make an excursion to the boyhood home of the great apostle, a journey of about two and a half hours—but there is very little to see when you get there and no hotel. The best way is to have the steward of the steamer put up a luncheon for you to carry along. In the time of the Cæsars, Tarsus was an important city, with extensive industries and a large trade. It was famous for a school of philosophy, and the mere fact that he came from Tarsus gave Paul a prestige for learning and wisdom. The population is now reduced to about 15,000. The people are engaged in the manufacture of cotton, which grows luxuriantly upon the unhealthy lowlands in the vicinity of Tarsus. The climate is hot and the city is unspeakably filthy. About half the population are Christians.

Antioch, the cradle of Christianity, can be reached from the port of Alexandretta by an all day's ride over a wretched road which was built twenty centuries ago by the Romans and looks as if it had not been repaired since. The whole country is covered with ruins, the result of destruction both by God and by man. This region is subject to frequent earthquakes, and by them

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was the splendid city of St. Paul's time overthrown. The Crusaders destroyed nearly everything that was left, and in 1872 there was a tremendous shaking which overturned and effaced some of the most interesting relics of Roman construction.

Alexander the Great was the actual founder of Antioch. He selected it as the site for a temple to Jupiter, which drew a large population, and it became the capital of the Macedonian dynasty. Pompey captured it in the year 64. Many Romans removed there, the Emperor Tiberius built palaces and other public buildings; it was the favorite residence of Caligula, Trajan, and Hadrian, and under Diocletian became the most luxurious and magnificent city of the age. The Orentes River, which has since filled up with silt, was then navigable for Roman galleys, and its banks were lined with wharves and warehouses. The commerce of Antioch extended from the pillars of Hercules to Peking. Caravans from China and India were continually crossing the desert laden with merchandise to be exchanged for the products of Europe. If you want to know something about Antioch at that period read the descriptions in "Ben-Hur," which are undoubtedly the most scholarly and accurate ever written, although I am told that General Wallace had never seen the city.

Under the Emperor Theodosius, Antioch reached its greatest magnificence and importance, and became the actual capital of the Roman Empire and the greatest commercial city of the world. The population is said to have been several millions. The city walls as now traced were more than twelve miles in circumference. In the years 457 and 458 terrible earthquakes occurred, the temples and palaces were overthrown, and no



fewer than 250,000 persons perished. In 528 another succession of catastrophies occurred, with 10,000 or more victims. Five hundred years later, when the Crusaders under Godfrey de Bouillon made Antioch their headquarters, the city was the scene of continual conflicts and massacres, fires and havoc, and the better part of it was destroyed.

Modern Antioch is a miserable collection of nondescript and filthy dwellings, half modern, half ancient, with walls of mud and roofs of corrugated iron and machine-cut slate imported from Europe. The streets are narrow and the pavements are covered with filth. There is no hotel. Strangers who are not so fortunate as to bring letters of introduction must seek shelter at a khan, where the caravans make their headquarters and the camels are fed. They must furnish their own bedding from necessity, and after the first meal they will provide their own provisions from choice. There is said to be 18,000 population, of whom 4,000 are Greeks and Armenian Christians. The remainder are Turks and Jews. The chief industry is the manufacture of licorice from the root we used to chew in childhood. It is crushed and pressed and the juice is boiled until it reaches a certain consistency, when it is poured into molds and allowed to harden into sticks such as you see in the drug stores. There is a good deal of leather work done in Antioch, and there are several soap factories, but, judging from appearances, there is no local demand for their product. Sugar cane grows with great luxuriance, but there is no factory to utilize it. Some unrefined sugar is made by hand for local consumption.

The ruins of the palaces and temples of the Roman era are mostly effaced, but the stadium, the scene of

the chariot race in "Ben Hur," can still be distinctly traced. Near by, in the side of a cliff, a splendid female figure of Titanic size was carved in the living rock by the Emperor Antiochus Epiphanes to avert a pestilence from the city, and it has been almost perfectly preserved. The island park of Daphne, so vividly described in "Ben Hur," where the nymph is said to have been metamorphosed into a laurel when pursued by Apollo, is covered with ruins of buildings, fountains, baths, aqueducts, fragments of columns and carved marble, and there are several artificial grottoes and numerous waterfalls, which gave the place its greatest attraction to the Romans. One can sit among the crumbling marble of the temples to Artemis, Isis, Aphrodite, and other deities, in this scene of perhaps the grossest profligacy in all history, and read General Wallace's descriptions with great satisfaction. To the student of Christian history Antioch has attractions second only to Jerusalem and Rome, for here, where was organized one of the first churches of Gentile followers of Jesus, they were called Christians, a term of derision which they afterward accepted; from here Paul started on his missionary tour, and here Peter was elected the first bishop of the church. The clergy of Antioch ranked with those of Alexandria and Rome at the Nicæan Council, and at the time of Constantine there are said to have been 200,000 Christians in the city, who had the finest church then standing, called the Church of the Apostles.

You meet all sorts of people traveling here, interesting and uninteresting, representatives of every race and religion. The Turkish Empire, the states in the interior of Asia and those upon the Mediterranean coast of Africa furnish many picturesque characters. Among



other passengers on our steamer was the new Turkish governor of Palestine. He is a handsome man, with a gentle, refined face, a melancholy eye and a deferential way about him, although perhaps he is not as amiable as he looks. As to Turks, appearances are said to be very deceptive. I have been told that the mildest-mannered men among them are the most ferocious, relentless, and vindictive, and in times of massacre and torturing come out particularly strong. But we could not help admiring the gentleness of demeanor, the perfect composure and graceful courtesy of this Turkish official, who seemed to be so unselfish and considerate. The sultan has the same winning ways. People who have seen him say that he is one of the most charming and attractive of men; that he would not injure a fly. Our gentle governor had been for many years a private secretary of Abdul Hamid, and perhaps may have acquired the manners of his imperial master. He had just been appointed and was on his way to his new post of duty. Many people came down to the steamer at Constantinople to see him off, and the deference they paid him showed that he is either a powerful or a popular man. They kissed his hands and the skirt of his coat, and the servants who attended him bowed their heads to the floor and touched their lips to his shoes.

Another passenger was a native of Syria, who had been engaged in business in New York for ten or twelve years, and had not been home during all that time. He told me that there are 40,000 Syrians in the United States. We had with us also a doctor who had been graduated at the American College at Beirut, and had gone to the United States for medical lectures.

Our most interesting passenger, however, was a

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merchant from Bokhara on his way to China to buy tea. His route seemed a little roundabout, but he expected to be home again six months from the date of his departure. We saw many Bokharans in Constantinople. They can be easily identified by their costume, like the representatives of the other Asiatic races—the rough, wild-looking fellows in long sheep-skin coats from the Caucasus Mountains, the Persians with fezzes made of black lamb's wool, and the people from Turkestan who have strong Mongolian features. Bokhara is in the center of Asia, on the west side of the Hindu-Kush range of mountains, which divides the worshipers of Buddha from those of Mohammed, and it is through that region that Russia has advanced with a threatening hand toward British India. The Bokharans are handsome men with Greek features, fine dark eyes, black hair, thin beards and mustaches and light brown complexions. They wear long surtouts of light blue color and fezzes of gray lamb's wool.

Our friend, the tea merchant, Fazli-lie Mean Mohammed, came from his home in Bokhara by railroad to the port of Krasnovodsk, on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, whence he sailed to Baku, a Russian port at the foot of the Caucasian Mountains. A military road crosses this range to Batoum on the Black Sea, whence there are regular steamers to Constantinople. After a short stay at the latter city he started by the Syrian coast for Port Said, where he will take a boat for Bombay and cross India by railway. In the central part of India, at the City of Hyderabad, articles of silver are manufactured of designs that are greatly admired by the people of Bokhara. He intended to stop there to make some purchases, and then go on to Colombo, in Ceylon, at the



extreme south of India, where he takes a steamer for Shanghai direct. In June of each year the tea merchants gather at Shanghai from all parts of the world, and the buying begins on a certain date.

"How much tea do you expect to buy?" I asked him.

"One hundred and thirty thousand Russian poods," he replied. "A pood is thirty-six English pounds, which makes a total of 4,680,000 pounds."

His purchase will be shipped from Shanghai by steamer to Vladivostok, the eastern terminus of the Trans-Siberian Railroad. From there it will be carried to Irkutsk by rail and then through central Asia, where Europeans have rarely been, a journey of forty-five days by camels to Tackend, the principal commercial city of Bokhara. Formerly tea was shipped all the way from Shanghai by camels, and was several months on the road. It requires many camels to carry 4,000,000 pounds.

"Wouldn't it be easier and quicker to go by boat from Shanghai to Constantinople and then across the Black and Caspian Seas, as you came?"

"Yes, but the tea would not be so good. Long sea voyages, especially through tropical climates, seriously injure tea, and the extreme salt atmosphere of the Black and Caspian Seas, which must be crossed, would do great damage in a short time. The tea would become saturated with the salted moisture in the air and the flavor would be ruined. Overland tea is in greater demand and brings much higher prices. The people of my country are very fastidious about their tea and drink very little else, so we take it to them in the way they prefer, even if it is a little more trouble."

Our Bokhara friend was a Moslem and observed

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the devotional hours of his faith with great regularity. He set a good example to the Christians on board, and we had quite of a number of "sky pilots" of different denominations. There was a Greek priest with a big beard, a big voice, and a cheerful disposition, who was singing to himself all day long, and a tall, lean, Roman Catholic priest with a hungry and anxious look. A handsome Franciscan monk had a little boy with him, and they seemed to be great chums; and two sisters of charity with calm, sweet faces and pensive blue eyes were on their way to a hospital in Jerusalem. An English parson was very seasick, but kept his nerve and read service for us on Sunday, and an agent of the British Bible Society preached a very good sermon. Then, we had an Englishman who makes olive wood relics in Jerusalem. The agent of the bible society told us that he was a "godly man" and never sold crosses, because he did not believe in encouraging ritualism.



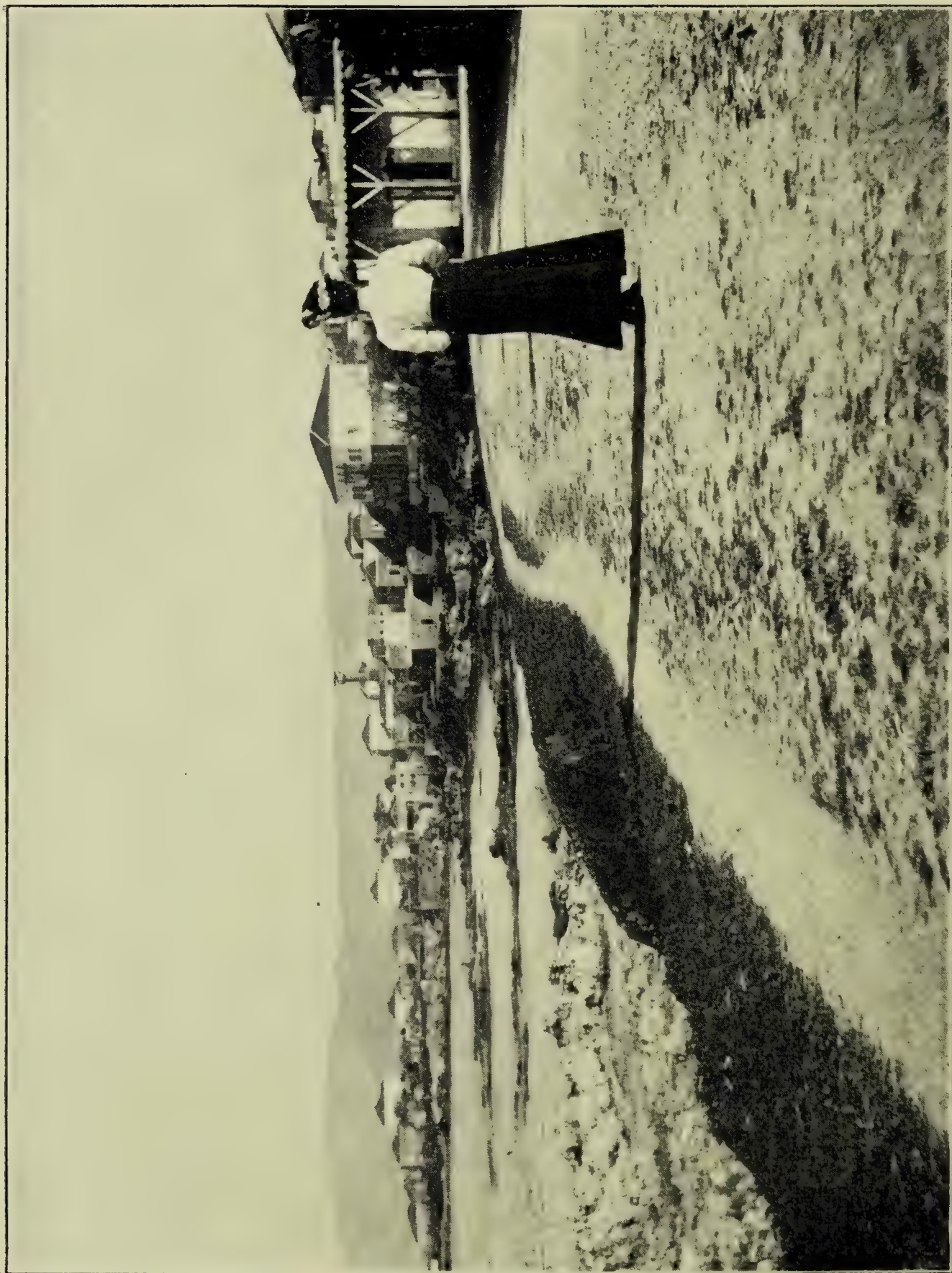
## II

# The Center of Mission Work in Syria









THE SHORE ROAD AT BEIRUT.



## II

### THE CENTER OF PROTESTANT MISSIONARY WORK IN SYRIA

Beirut presents a noble front to the world, and well it may, backed by range after range of mighty mountains which spend their winters under blankets of snow and their summers bathed in a flood of sunshine. They are the most famous of all mountains. More people have no doubt heard and read of them than of any other. The Lebanons were the theme of the Song of Solomon and the Psalms of David, and all through the Old and New Testaments they are praised. They are much higher than I supposed. People who have not informed themselves are always surprised to see snow-clad peaks rising immediately from the Mediterranean in that semi-tropical region. Mount Sannin is 8,555 feet high and Mount Hermon, which culminates in three peaks, is 9,050.

The sun was blazing fiercely as the steamer approached the shore, and a vague haze hung like a veil between the foot-hills and the sea, giving them a mysterious appearance. Above the curtain arose long lines of sierras, rugged and jagged, whose crests glistened like mirrors and made you turn your eyes seaward for relief. The first thought that comes to the mind when one looks upon this marvelous landscape is the history that those hills have hidden; the acts and words that have been done and said within their shadows; the portentous dramas affecting every race and nation that have been enacted with the peaks of Lebanon as a background.

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Why should all the great religions of mankind, except Brahmanism and Buddhism, have been conceived in the narrow strip of territory between those mountains and the desert?

Mount Hermon was a holy mountain before Scripture days, and prehistoric temples, shrines, and altars for sacrifice are scattered over it. We read of the ancient worship in the days of Abraham, when sacrifices were made in the caves and gorges that break its surface. The Hebrews extolled its majestic heights. They valued it as a collector of clouds. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," said David. "As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended from the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore." Solomon invites his spouse to come with him from Lebanon, "From the lion's den and the mountain of leopards," and people say that there are plenty of wild beasts there still. Bears are frequently seen on Mount Hermon, foxes, wolves, and other wild animals abound. During the winter the snow line is 3,000 feet from the summit, and the shaded ravines are full all summer. In ancient times it was customary to bring down snow in baskets to cool the beverages of the men engaged in the hot harvest fields. "As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him," said Solomon, "for he refresheth the soul of his masters."

Beirut is the most prosperous city in Syria, as well as the most attractive. The atmosphere is so clear that you might almost look for footprints in the snow upon the summit of Mount Hermon, thirty miles away. The plains around the city are occupied with gardens



and orchards of olives and figs, which are said to be the most productive in all the land, and there are several pine forests which have been planted by successive governors of Beirut for 250 years. In the suburbs, wherever irrigation can reach, the soil produces wonders. The groves of orange and lemon, mulberry, fig, almond, and apricot trees are radiant just now with their new spring garments, and their blossoms are loading the air with their fragrance. Groups of stately palms, the proudest and the vainest of trees, toss their feathery plumes in the sunlight, and the ugly walls and trellises are covered with flowering vines. There is a purple flower—I have not learned its name—which seems to grow with greater glory than any other. It lights up the whole city and gives a brightness and a glow to the place.

Beirut has about 120,000 inhabitants. Of these 36,000 are Moslems, 35,000 Orthodox Greeks, 28,000 Maronites, 9,000 United Greeks, 2,500 Jews, 1,800 Roman Catholics, 2,100 Protestant and representatives of five or six other religions. The European colony numbers 4,300. There are six hospitals, twenty-three mosques, thirty-eight Christian churches, sixty-five schools for boys, and twenty-nine for girls, with 6,700 and 4,100 pupils respectively. There are asylums for the blind and other afflicted, orphanages for the care of fatherless children, kindergartens and day nurseries for the benefit of the little ones, and every sort of institution that is expected in modern cities. It is surprising how many of the Syrians speak English and how large a number have once lived in the United States. In spite of all the impediments thrown by the government in the way of emigration, from 3,000 to 4,000 go to the United States every year. They prac-

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tice the utmost industry and live with the utmost frugality in their new homes, and as soon as they have accumulated a little property the most of them return to their beloved Syria to spend the remainder of their days.

American missionary work was begun in Palestine at Jerusalem in 1821 by Levi Parsons, a Presbyterian. He was joined by Pliny Fisk and Jonas King in 1823, but in 1825 they were compelled to retire because of political disturbances and the missions were suspended for nine years. In 1823 Isaac Bird and William Goodell, of the American Board of Foreign Missions, landed at Beirut, opened a school and began to circulate the Holy Scriptures among the people, but two years later they also were compelled to withdraw until 1830. Since the latter date work has been continuous, this field being allotted to the Presbyterians in 1870. Until 1840 Protestantism was *religio illicita*, but in that year was recognized by the sultan as one of the religions of Turkey. In 1844 Sultan Abdul Medjid issued a firman forbidding persecution and interference. In 1850 he granted "The Imperial Protestant Charter of Rights," guaranteeing Protestants all the rights and privileges of the other religious sects of the empire. In 1850 was proclaimed the famous edict guaranteeing that Moslem converts to Christianity should not be put to death. This was due to an event which shocked the world. A young Moslem was publicly beheaded at Constantinople for becoming a Christian. But the letter as well as the spirit of this charter has always been evaded. The Turks do not understand the meaning of religious liberty. Freedom of conscience has never existed for Mohammedans, and those who abandon the faith of their fathers do so with the penalty of



death upon them. But if there were no greater obstacles the pride of the Turk would prevent him from adopting Christianity, even if he ceased to have faith in his own religion. In the Turkish Empire none but Mohammedans may rule or serve in the civil or military services. Christians of whatever sect are in a state of subjection.

While there is no official restriction upon Christians and interference with their work and worship is prohibited, active opposition is constantly felt in an indirect way from the officials of the government and the municipalities and of an exasperating character. The most patient and persistent efforts often fail to secure the fulfillment of promises and the Christian has no remedy against the violation of contracts. It may be said that this applies to all religious communities except Mohammedans. Protestants, particularly American Protestants, are treated as well as anybody and perhaps a little better than others, because they are few in number, they are entirely exempt from all political complications, they seek no favors, they pay for what they get on liberal terms and are the most intelligent, progressive, and benevolent portion of the community.

The Irish Presbyterian church has a station at Damascus, where it has taken over the American interests; the British Syrian School Society has schools at several of the cities and villages, the Free Church of Scotland maintains a number of schools in the Lebanon district; the Established Church of Scotland has a mission to the Jews in Beirut; the Church of England has several stations in Palestine; the Reformed Presbyterians of the United States have missions among the Nusaireeyeh people; the Presbyterian Church of England has a mis-

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sion at Aleppo especially for the Jews, and there are several other Protestant missionary enterprises in Syria in addition to those of the American Presbyterian Board.

In 1860 the translation of the New Testament into Arabic was completed by Rev. Dr. Cornelius V. A. Van Dyke. The work was begun in 1848 by Dr. Eli Smith, aided by Mr. Bistany, a native scholar, formerly a Maronite, who is said to have been the most learned as well as the most influential man in modern Syria. He was the author of the Arabic dictionary and the Arabic encyclopedia. The latter is a comprehensive work of twelve volumes, a compilation and translation from the best English, American, French, and German encyclopedias, with additions and emendations appropriate to the Arabic people. His death in 1883 was a great loss, especially to literary and scientific circles. He continued to assist Dr. Van Dyke, who took up the work of translating the Bible when Dr. Smith died in 1857, and continued to be his chief collaborateur. It was a labor of sixteen years for three devoted scholars, and was nearly all done in a little room in the building now occupied by the Beirut Female Seminary. A memorial tablet in Arabic and English was placed upon the walls some years ago by President Gilman of Johns Hopkins University, to commemorate one of the most important events in the history of missions. It must be remembered that this achievement was not for Syria alone. Arabic is the sacred language of 300,000,000 or 400,000,000 people who dwell in all quarters of the globe, and at least 2,000,000 are now under the care of the United States in the Philippine Islands. No scholars are so critical as learned Arabs, and it is gratifying to know that,



without exception, they pronounce the translation of the Bible by Dr. Smith, Dr. Van Dyke and Mr. Bistany accurate and classical. It is now printed in New York, London, and Beirut in different sizes and forms and sold in all Mohammedan countries. Since the translation of the Old Testament was finished in 1865 over 650,000 copies have been printed and sold to the several Arab nations of the earth.

In 1887 the majlis el maarif, or minister of public instruction, by order of the sultan (Caliph of Mohammed and head of the Islam faith), placed the seal of authorization upon thirty-three different editions of the Arabic scriptures. Since that time the local censors have approved 330 different American publications in Arabic.

One most potent engine of civilization in Syria is the American printing office, which occupies a handsome new building at Beirut, and is the especial pride of the American colony.) It is the largest and the most complete up-to-date plant in Turkey, and four steam and six hand presses, a lithographing and electrotyping outfit, a type foundry, a book bindery and other features of a first-class printing office, are kept busy turning out copies of the Bible, religious, scientific, and standard literature and school text-books of all grades in the Arabic language. Over seven hundred different works in Arabic have been published, and are now offered to the public. Last year (1901) 28,705,760 pages were printed, 3,000,000 more than in 1900, of which 16,000,000 pages were scriptures and 10,000,000 miscellaneous books; 41,500 volumes of the scriptures and 45,400 volumes of miscellaneous literature were printed, besides two newspapers issued

regularly each week. In 1901 27,000 copies of the Arabic Bible were sold in Mohammedan lands, 7,421 in Syria. It is estimated that 750,000,000 pages have been published by the American printing office in Beriut since it was established.

The managers are often embarrassed by the censorship of the government, which is very strict, and all manuscripts and proof sheets must be submitted to the inspection of officials who are not always intelligent enough to understand the subjects they are required to decide upon. When in doubt they almost invariably reject. Very often manuscripts and books forwarded to Constantinople to be examined by the chief censors have been returned mutilated and disapproved. Sometimes the criticisms are absurd and insignificant, and matter which one might expect would be objected to is passed without hesitation. Most of the books issued by the American press, however, have been officially sanctioned because the editors have been scrupulous in obeying the edict which requires them to confine their publications to scientific, moral, and religious questions without adverse criticism upon the religious beliefs of any of the sects in the empire. The same government inspection is exercised over English books imported through the custom house. They are often confiscated and burned without reason, but only with some pretext, probably because the inspectors either do not have the time or the disposition to read them and do not dare let them go through without. Children's books, the most innocent primers and nursery rhymes, are often confiscated because the inspectors do not comprehend their meaning. One day an American gentleman residing in Beirut lost a catalogue sent him by a publishing house in New York City



because the censor could not make any meaning out of it and concluded that it must be some seditious work in cipher.

( That remarkable little volume, "Black Beauty," which has been circulated all over the world in many languages, teaching its lesson of kindness to beasts, had to be published under the title "Black Horse" because the Turkish equivalent for "Black Beauty" happens to be the name of a high official. ) The word Armenia is not allowed to appear in print since the massacres four years ago, and pages of the publications issued by the American printing office which contain it have had to be reprinted to satisfy the inspectors. More costly corrections have been required on the maps, for the name Armenia is not allowed to appear even in the Bible. The orders of the Censor are to strike out "Armenia" whenever it appears in the Holy Scriptures, and insert "Kurdistan". Another curious and even more absurd rule of the censor is that Brazil shall continue to be mentioned as a monarchy on the maps as well as in the geographies and other publications, because the sultan does not care to have his people know that thrones are ever overturned and emperors are ever deprived of power. All of the Balkan States, including Servia, Bulgaria, Roumania, Crete, Cyprus, and other former provinces of Turkey, and about one-third of the continent of Africa, from Egypt to Algiers, must appear as a part of the sultan's domains or the map is not allowed to be published. A map of Palestine as it was at the time of David and the kings of Israel was prepared under the direction of the missionaries, but was suppressed by the Turkish officials, who explained that an intimation that David or any other king had

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ever ruled over the country was disrespect to its present ruler, the sultan of Turkey.

The censor at Constantinople in 1903 ordered that the text of the seventh and eighth verses of the first chapter of Thessalonians be amended by striking out the name Macedonia and inserting "the Vilayets of Salonica and Monastir." There is another story that the censor objected to the sign  $H_2O$  in an English book of chemistry, because he suspected it to be a revolutionary cypher, meaning "Abdul Hamid II is naught," or "powerless."

It is impossible to measure the value of the results accomplished by the American missionaries and the printing office. Statistics give only a meager idea of the length and the breadth and the depth of the influence they have exerted upon society and civilization generally. The American College at Beirut and the other schools have created an ambition for education among the people which the government and other religious denominations have been compelled to satisfy, but it should be said that the Protestant schools were in operation more than a quarter of a century before any others were started in Palestine for general education. Before that date every educational institution was purely ecclesiastic and devoted to the training of priests. In 1894 a memorial column was unveiled at Beirut on the spot where fifty-nine years before was established the first school in Syria for the instruction of girls. One of the speakers was Miss Alice Bistany, daughter of Dr. Smith's assistant in translating the Bible. Her mother was the first native girl taught to read in Syria. The schools of Beirut alone illustrate how effective has been the force of example. Nearly every religious denomination now



maintains them. The training schools established by the American mission for the higher education of teachers and for those whose families are able to pay for such advantages have also done a great work, and their graduates are found in every part of the Turkish Empire. A training school for boys with a model farm takes in about 350 lads and gives them a good practical education. There are always more applications than can be gratified. In 1830, when the missionaries returned from Malta, where they had taken refuge during the political disturbances, the entire Protestant community in the Turkish Empire, consisting of five persons, came out in a rowboat to welcome them. In 1900 7,000 Protestants were registered in Syria alone and 75,000 in the Turkish Empire. Medical work has always been found the most effective in removing prejudice and securing public confidence. The professors of the American College are the medical attendants of the Hospital of St. John, which is in charge of the deaconesses of Kaiserwerth and owned and supported by the Johanniter Order, composed of the flower of the Protestant nobility of Germany, with the emperor as its head. They treat about 14,000 cases annually.

Miss Mary Pierson Eddy, M. D., of the Presbyterian mission at Beirut, in the spring of 1902 opened a free hospital among the Maronites, who are the most intolerant and the most violent in their prejudices against Protestantism, and particularly against the Americans, of any sect in Syria. They are a fierce and fanatical relic of the ancient Syrian church and take their name from John Maron, a priest and patriarch of great learning and piety, who died 707 A. D. They number about 250,000; their head is known as the

Patriarch of Antioch, and he makes his headquarters at the Convent of Deman, near the port of Tripoli. The peasants are ignorant, superstitious and cruel, but are industrious, frugal and honest in their dealings. They live by agriculture, have large herds of cattle in the Lebanon Mountains and are particularly successful in silk culture. The Druses are their hereditary enemies, and between the two sects continuous warfare has been waged for centuries. The Maronites are equally hostile to the Turks and to all Mohammedans, and during the middle ages were the allies of the Crusaders, by whom, in the twelfth century, they were brought under the influence of the Roman Catholic church, and have since affiliated with them, although they are in no way subject to ecclesiastical authority and retain their ancient rites and doctrines. They are also friendly with the Greek Catholics.

Through the influence of the Franciscan fathers half a century ago they secured the protection of the French government, and with the assistance of Emperor Louis Napoleon, after continuous revolts against the Turkish authorities, the Maronites succeeded in securing a certain degree of independence. They now collect their own taxes in their own way and turn the money over in bulk to the representative of the sultan. They select their own sheik and other officials, subject to his ratification, and they are exempt from military duty and from the many exasperating annoyances and outrages to which the remainder of the anti-Moslem population of Turkey are exposed.

Their religious belief is difficult to comprehend, being a mixture of Jewish and Roman Catholic rites and doctrines. Theoretically they accept both the Old and the New Testaments, although the priests for-



bid the circulation of the scriptures among the people. They profess to observe the Mosaic laws as well as the teachings of Christ, but have modified both to meet their tastes and surroundings. They believe in God as a Creator and Jesus Christ as a Redeemer, but reject the dogmas of the Holy Spirit, the immaculate conception, the resurrection of the body, and several other tenets taught by the Roman Church. They adhere to the ancient ritual of the Syrian faith, which is similar to that of the Jews; their service is conducted in the Syriac language; their priests are allowed to marry and husbands and wives may be divorced. They have very little communication or relations with other religious sects, are very conservative, remaining as exclusive and as primitive as possible; they have their own villages, in which unbelievers are not allowed to reside, and Protestant missionaries have met with determined opposition whenever they have attempted to establish schools, distribute the scriptures or preach among them. The only martyr to the cause of protestantism in Syria was a young Maronite who, having been converted and baptized into the Protestant Church, was sealed up in a dungeon in the monastery of the Maronite patriarch, where he was allowed to starve to death, and his fate was made known as a warning to others.

To Junieh, one of the chief towns of this people, Miss Eddy went to establish a hospital and introduce the modern science of medicine. She first applied to the bishop of that diocese for permission to do so, which was refused, and she was not only forbidden to carry out her plans, but the people of the town were forbidden to rent her a building. On the outskirts of the town, however, she found a suitable building for

the purpose owned by a man who had the nerve to defy the bishop, and obtained a lease for two years by paying the entire rental in advance. Attached to the lease is a clause requiring the return of all the rent and the payment of a heavy forfeit if the contract is not carried out by the owner of the property. This lease was obtained largely through the influence of the governor, to whom Miss Eddy presented her firmin from the sultan, and by his advice she had a copy of the document approved by the local judges and spread upon the records of the court, which is equivalent to the rendering of a judgment in her favor in advance, if the owner of the property should attempt to evict her. The governor encouraged the scheme; he welcomed a free hospital, as he believes it is very much needed among the people, and the introduction of modern medical treatment in place of the superstitious rites practiced by the Maronites.

Miss Eddy takes a heroic view of her mission. She deems it her duty and considers it her privilege to act as a wedge in opening to American missionary work a hitherto inaccessible territory. It is her purpose, she says, to make American missionaries known and respected among the Maronites, who have refused to receive them for seventy years; to gain the confidence of the officials, the priests, and the people, and open the way for educational and evangelical work. It requires courage, determination and tact to accomplish this, and she has all three qualities in abundance beyond most women. Perhaps Miss Eddy is the only person living who could safely make the attempt without inviting martyrdom.

Her father was the late Rev. Dr. William W. Eddy, who came to Beirut as a missionary in 1851 and



remained here until his death, one of the most useful and influential men in the field. Her mother is still engaged in the work after fifty-two years of experience. Her brother, Rev. W. K. Eddy, has charge of an important field, with his headquarters at Sidon, and her sister is the wife of Rev. F. E. Hoskins of Beirut. Miss Eddy's life has been spent among the Syrians. She knows them with a knowledge that can only be gained by such association, and is more widely and favorably known among the common people than any other woman because of her skill as a physician and surgeon and her wonderful success in healing thousands of diseased that have come to her from all parts of Syria. The superstitious natives look upon her with veneration, as a miracle worker. The upper classes respect and admire her for her qualities as a woman, as well as for her professional skill.

There are other and especial reasons why Miss Eddy is the best person for the mission she has undertaken. She is the only woman in Syria, or anywhere else for that matter, who carries a firman from the sultan of Turkey. That portentous document, which was granted to a Protestant missionary by the head of the Mohammedan church as a reward for her usefulness and a tribute to her skill, is of course a great protection. It enables her to call upon the officials and the military authorities for any assistance or supplies that she may need, it entitles her to a military escort whenever she desires, and in various other directions gives her an importance which no other woman and no other missionary possesses. Furthermore, Miss Eddy is known personally or by reputation to nearly every official and person of prominence in the country. She has attended successfully many difficult cases in their

families; patients are brought to her from all parts of Syria, and she is frequently called upon to make long journeys to attend the women of the families of the pashas and other men of influence.

The American College at Beirut was established in 1866. The first class was graduated in 1870. The medical department was opened in 1867. The corner stone of the main building was laid in 1871 by the late William E. Dodge of New York. A department of commerce, of which much is expected, was established in 1900. The first year of the institution there were sixteen students. In 1902 there were over six hundred. There are thirty-five acres of ground in the campus and twelve buildings, as fine as you will see at the average American institution and of similar architecture. The faculty numbers thirty-five professors and instructors, of whom seventeen are Americans. The growth of the institution has been gradual and permanent, the best of testimony to its usefulness. In 1870 there were 77 students; in 1876, 106; in 1880, 152; in 1886, 170; in 1890, 200; in 1896, 297; in 1900, 435; in 1901, 544; in 1902, 600. More room on the campus and more buildings for the accommodation of the students are greatly needed, and if any gentleman in the United States has a few thousand dollars he would like to invest in a noble and useful enterprise that will pay him bigger dividends than the Standard Oil Company, he may apply to the president of the board of trustees, Morris K. Jesup of New York, for a block of stock in the Syrian Protestant College. Its coat-of-arms is a venerable cedar of Lebanon and its motto is: "The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."

The students come from Egypt, Greece, Turkey in



Europe, Asia Minor, Persia, Syria and the Sudan, besides Germans, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Italians and Americans from the foreign colony in Syria. Tuition is \$25 a year, and including board \$125 a year, just enough to give a value to the instruction and not too much to shut out young men who are in earnest for learning. The college is undenominational and the instruction is entirely nonsectarian. Although it was founded by the Presbyterians, members of several other denominations are found in the faculty. Religious exercises, however, are compulsory. Students are required to attend chapel daily, public worship and Sunday school on the Sabbath, and the study of the Bible is a regular part of the curriculum. Several hours a week are devoted to the study of ethics—everyday morals, including the duty of man to his fellow men, truth, honesty, candor, justice—for the purpose of quickening the moral sense of the students and to train them thoroughly in the ethical principles that are the foundation of Christian society. But no evangelical work is attempted. The idea is to educate and not to convert; to prepare the minds and leave the rest to Providence. President Bliss says: "It is possible for a pagan to enter our college, and he may go out a pagan, but it will not be possible for him to remain long in ignorance of the laws of God in the physical, mental and moral world."

The students represent all of the many races and religions in Syria. Some object at first to religious instruction and to being required to attend Christian worship, but no exceptions are made, and ultimately they accept the situation gracefully, and often show deep interest in subjects to which they were originally averse. In the chapel Sunday morning is to be found

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a congregation of six hundred fine-looking young men—Jews, Greeks, Mohammedans, Maronites, Druses, Armenians, Roman Catholics and believers in all the many creeds that prevail in Palestine. They sing Christian hymns to the accompaniment of a fine organ, join in the responsive readings of the Holy Scriptures, and hear a sermon that does not refer to doctrinal controversies, but treats of the evidences of Christianity and the moral law. Each Sunday afternoon for an hour the same students—Jews, Gentiles and Moslems—meet for Bible study. Controversial points are avoided. Old Testament history and the teachings of Jesus are made prominent, and frequently the greatest interest is shown by the Mohammedan and the Jewish students. No criticism is passed upon other religions any more than upon other nations. Politics and theology are both barred. It is not intended to denationalize the young men or to draw them away from their families. The purpose is to prepare them for the duties and the labors of life. The country wants teachers, lawyers, editors, judges, engineers, physicians, pharmacists, clerks and interpreters, and the college is called upon to supply all of these needs.

As French is the common language in official and commercial circles in Syria, much time is devoted to its study, but all instruction is given in English, and everything about the institution is distinctly American—American professors, American text-books, American methods, American furniture, American athletics and American literature. In the erection of the new building all the materials were imported from the United States, the machinery and apparatus, the instruments and appliances in the laboratories, in the observatory, in the hospital and even in the kitchen,



are all American, and one great idea of the faculty is to impress upon the young men the superiority of American institutions and American products, and American ideas of education, truth and commercial integrity. Therefore, as an outpost of American civilization the institution is powerful and important, and the recently established school of commerce is expected to deepen the impression already made, as well as to cultivate trade relations between Syria and the United States.

This school of commerce is in imitation of those recently established in New York, Philadelphia, Madison, Wis., and other cities of the United States. The growth of commerce and industry in the East is opening opportunities for profitable and useful careers, outside of politics and professional circles. There is a rapidly increasing demand for trained men in business enterprises. In view of these facts, President Bliss and his associates have adopted courses of study which seem best adapted to educate students in the commercial methods of the United States, modified to meet the peculiar conditions of this part of the world. It is not merely a commercial college to teach penmanship, bookkeeping and mathematical computations, but to equip men for responsible positions and for leadership, and to instill into their minds the highest standard of business integrity, which is a very important point in Syria, where the sense of deception has been abnormally developed.

A school of biblical archeology has been established for the benefit of clergymen and other scholars who wish to investigate the lands of the Bible in an easier and more economical manner than can be done by individual effort. The library of the college is espe-

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cially rich in subjects pertaining to this department, and the long experience and wide knowledge of several members of the faculty make them especially competent in directing such inquiries. The rate of tuition is \$250 a year, including board and room.

The medical department is one of the most important of the institutions and has already sent out hundreds of competent physicians to introduce modern medical science for the relief of the suffering, who until recent years have been treated only by the sorcerers and old women of their villages. In looking over the list of the alumni, I find that most of the graduates of the medical school are occupying official positions in connection with the sanitary department of the government and in the armies of Turkey and Egypt.

Dr. Daniel Bliss, who founded the institution, and has been its president from the start, retired in 1902 because of his age and infirmities, and was succeeded by his son. No man living can look back upon his career with greater satisfaction than Dr. Bliss. The fruits of his labors are always before him. The alumni of the Beirut College are already taking steps to erect a monument in his honor. Dr. Bliss has exercised a powerful influence upon Turkish civilization, not only directly, but indirectly, through the students who have been under his charge, by giving them an ideal of true manhood as well as instruction and advice. Such men make America honored and respected wherever they go.

By far the larger part of the graduates of the college go into official positions because their education fits them for such work. They become judges, professors in the native schools, editors, physicians, engineers, interpreters, heads of business bureaus and departments. Their qualifications to lead and to command



are quickly recognized. They learn something more than is found in books. The discipline of the institution is of the greatest importance because the American method is practically unknown to the orientals and is foreign to their habits. The college is a living school of democracy. The faculty told me that the athletic ground is the most important branch in this respect. Sports are great levelers. They are new in Syria. The natives of this part of the country do not take kindly to them at first. They do not understand why anyone should undergo exertion unless compelled to do so. A young Arab student, soon after his arrival at the college, watched a party of professors playing tennis with great wonder and expressed surprise that they did not require their servants to play for them. But the young men very soon get over such notions. Athletic excitement is contagious, and when an oriental once takes an interest in sports he soon becomes very enthusiastic. The football and baseball games, the field sports and other athletic events at the college awaken as much popular interest in Beirut and the surrounding country as in our own college towns, and are attended by large crowds of friends and the families of the participants. The small boys of Beirut worship the football and baseball heroes with genuine human nature, and they have the college yell:

Rah! Rah! Rah! Rip! Rah! Ree!  
 Boom! Ah! Boom! Ah! S. P. C.

The loyalty of the graduates to their alma mater is one of the most gratifying signs of its usefulness. Their reminiscences of college life are as precious to them as ours are to us, and thus the influence of the institution never dies.

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Beirut is not mentioned in the Bible. None of the apostles ever visited the city, so far as we know, but Christianity was early established there and the city became the seat of a bishopric. It continued to grow and prosper, and under the reign of Justinian became one of the most famous seats of learning in the Roman Empire. Its law school, which flourished for a period of three centuries, was attended by students from Greece, Alexandria and Constantinople, and the literary fame of Beirut spread throughout the world, until 551, when the city was almost entirely destroyed by an earthquake. Its colleges, churches, temples, theaters and palaces were overthrown and a multitude of the inhabitants were buried beneath the ruins. It is impossible to dig a foundation for a house or plow a garden without finding memorials of that dreadful calamity from which the city never recovered. Its age may be reckoned from an imperishable visitor's book, which dates back at least fourteen centuries before the Christian era. Upon a living rock, beside the remains of an old Phoenician road chiseled from the face of the precipice before written history began, for they had no dynamite in those days, are curious tablets commemorating the visits of emperors and other distinguished men at various periods of the world's history, from the Egyptian Pharaoh in whose brickyard occurred the first great strike, down to the German kaiser, who honored this country with his presence in 1898. The first tablet relates to various expeditions of Sesostris, Rameses II., who refused to let Israel go until Moses demonstrated the expediency of that proposition. Another commemorates the presence of Sennacharib, who invaded Syria in the year 701 before Christ. There



are several other mementoes of Assyrian and Egyptian kings, and it is remarkable that the tablets have been so well preserved all these many centuries. Marcus Antonius, who reigned at Rome from 161 to 180, repaired the road and built new bridges, as we happen to know by reason of a fine Latin inscription, in which he designates himself as "The Conqueror of Germany." There is no such visitor's book in all the rest of the world, and no such register of arrivals at any place that I have ever heard of.

According to tradition Jonah's little affair with the whale took place a short distance down the coast, and the exact spot can be pointed out to those who have the curiosity to see it. Some skeptics have declared that whales never inhabited the Mediterranean Sea, but that is not true. They are frequently seen nowadays, at least two were reported during the winter of 1901-2; and, furthermore, any one who will examine the maps and charts made by Ptolemy, the great Egyptian geographer, will notice pictures of monstrous fish sailing about in different parts of the Mediterranean, spouting up large columns of water, just as whales do at the present day. Jonah is supposed to have been buried at a place called Nebyyunas, where a mosque called Mukam-en-Neby, with a low white dome, covers his alleged grave, and is visited annually by large numbers of invalids, who make vows while sick and come there with offerings to fulfill them after their recovery. Jonah is believed to have been a native of this part of the country.

The Bay of St. George, upon which Beirut is situated, gets its name from the fact that the tutelary saint of Great Britain slew the dragon upon its shores. Fragments of old buttresses on the roadside show where

a chapel was erected to his memory by the Crusaders; in a garden that surrounds it, near a dilapidated old mosque, is a pit or well in which the carcass of the dead monster was cast, and just a little farther away is a spring in which St. George washed the blood from his hands after the deed. St. George was a native of the town of Lydda, one of the stations upon the railroad between Jaffa and Jerusalem, and suffered martyrdom there during the persecutions by the Emperor Domitian. The Crusaders, when they arrived at Lydda, found a church standing over his grave, which, in their opinion, was the best specimen of ecclesiastical architecture in the country, and they took it for their own. Richard Coeur-de-Leon decorated his ensign with a picture of the encounter with the dragon, and through his influence St. George became the patron saint of England. According to the records of the church, St. George was one of the early converts to Christianity and lived not more than a century after the death of the Saviour; but why he was prancing around Beirut on a charger, rescuing beautiful maidens from the jaws of fire-breathing monsters, is difficult to explain. The legend says that a terrible dragon inhabited these waters from time immemorial and, to prevent it from devouring the entire town, the people of Beirut were required to offer to it as a sacrifice one maiden on the first day of every year. The custom became so fixed that the families of the community took turns in furnishing the victims. When it came the turn of the governor of the province he refused to sacrifice his one beloved child, the most beautiful girl in the country, but the people insisted. They had seen their own daughters eaten by the monster year after year and did not propose to permit an exemption



of their magistrate. So the girl was taken and chained to a rock on the edge of the bay, and the monster was crawling out of the water to seize her just as St. George came riding along, mounted upon a beautiful steed, with a big white plume in his hat and a glistening spear in his hand. Hearing the shrieks of terror from the girl and the growls of satisfaction from the dragon, he recognized the situation, and, plunging his trusty spear into the open jaws of the beast, he pressed the point into its brain. The body of the dragon was thrown into the pit, the beautiful maiden was restored to her parents, and I suppose that St. George married her. At least, he ought to have done so.

Another interesting story concerns the origin of the name of Dog River, an eager, dashing stream, which pours down from the mountains of Lebanon and supplies the City of Beirut with water through the management of a French company. In ancient days the traditions say that an enormous beast of stone in the shape of a dog stood at the mouth of this river, and some genius arranged an aqueduct so that the waters of the river could be turned through the body of the image and made to flow out of its mouth, causing a roar which could be heard for many miles, and so soul-chilling that it terrified all the enemies of Beirut who dared to approach the city and compelled them to turn away.

Back in the mountains is the birthplace and the shrine of Adonis, and Venus is said to have been a frequent visitor here in old times. No news of either of them has been published lately, although there are twelve daily papers in Beirut, as newsy as they are numerous, and the most enterprising in all the Ottoman Empire.





### III

## The Journey to Damascus









THE SHIP OF THE DESERT.



### III

#### THE JOURNEY TO DAMASCUS

There is an excellent railway between Beirut and Damascus, a narrow gauge, operated on the rack and pinion system, with cog-wheels at the heavy grades. It winds in and out of the gorges, clinging to the mountain sides, and crosses a pass in the Lebanon Mountains at an elevation of 4,480 feet. Then it drops down into a beautiful little valley and again ascends, crossing the Anti-Lebanon Range at an altitude of 4,100 feet, which brings it into the Valley of Damascus, 2,540 feet above the sea. The distance is ninety-one miles, and for a greater part the track follows the old caravan road which has been used since the time of Abraham. It belongs to a French company and is being slowly extended beyond Damascus and into parallel valleys in order to reach the most fertile sections of Syria. The track is solid and well ballasted, the rails are fifty-five pounds to the foot, the ties of iron, the bridges of stone and the embankments are rivetted with walls of masonry in the most careful, costly and permanent manner. The station houses, water tanks, side tracks, repair shops, engine houses and other property are on the same scale. The road was built and is operated by Swiss engineers, being similar in many respects to the Swiss railways. The rolling stock is comfortable, clean and kept in good repair, but is insufficient for the traffic. There are many complaints about delay in transportation, which are due to the lack of cars, and upon our train thirty-one people holding first-class tickets could find

only three first-class compartments, with six places each, which, according to the Turkish method of reasoning, is the fault of the passengers for coming in such numbers, and not of the company.

The journey from Beirut to Damascus is almost a duplicate of a trip over the Mexican National Railway, and the resemblance to certain portions of southern Colorado and northern New Mexico is very striking. A resident of Santa Fe or Agua Calientes would feel very much at home in this part of Syria, although he would wonder at the trouble and expense the people have taken to retain and cultivate the few little fertile spots that the Creator has allotted them. The mountain sides have been walled up in terraces like gigantic stairways, to prevent the soil from being washed off by the rain; the terraces are planted with grapes, figs, olives and mulberry trees, which have been cultivated by the same families for hundreds and perhaps for thousands of years. Olive trees live to a great age; fig trees never die, and some of the grapevines to be seen along the roadside are as thick as a man's body. The Syrians cultivate grapes in a curious way. In the fall of the year, after the fruit has been gathered, the vines are pruned down to a trunk about the height of a man, which is laid flat upon the ground until springtime, when it is propped up, manured and irrigated. New branches will shoot out, cover the soil all around it and bear fruit. No sap is wasted in nourishing useless leaves and vines. Hence the vineyards have a peculiar look in the winter time, being rows of trunks of different sizes, from six inches to a foot in diameter and from five to eight feet long, which lie upon the ground in lines like a sleeping army.

All along the railway line, wherever there is a vacant



place, the farmers are setting out mulberry trees, which are planted very closely together and cultivated like house plants, so that they will grow rapidly and bear luxuriant leaves. This is in obedience to the rapid increase of the silk industry, which is very great at Damascus. The ground is very carefully prepared. It is plowed deep, harrowed fine, and then a series of trenches are dug for the trees about eighteen or twenty inches in depth, which are first filled with water before the young shoots are placed in them. The trenches are dug by a peculiar process. Did you ever see three men handle one shovel, or is it an invention of the Syrians? Just above the blade of the shovel two ropes are fastened and the ends are held by men on each side of the trench. The shovel is manipulated by a third, who plunges it into the earth as deep as his strength will permit, and then the men with the ropes hoist the load out for him. The three work together with considerable skill and ease, and can throw out a good deal of dirt in a day. It is next to a patent excavator. The same process is often used in lifting water from a reservoir into an irrigating ditch when there is no pump. Two men with ropes attached to a bushel basket will fill the basket in the reservoir and empty it into the ditch without touching it with their hands, in the most skillful and rapid manner.

The increase in the manufacture of silk at Damascus can be traced to the world's fair at Chicago. In the Turkish village, the Streets of Cairo, the Manufactures Building and other parts of the grounds were large stalls for the sale of scarfs, table spreads, turbans, girdles and other forms of Damascus silk, which became very popular and have since been in vogue both to wear and for decorative purposes. You can

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find them in every village of the United States, but until 1893 little was exported from Damascus, although the industry had been important for centuries. It is said that the value of the silkworm was discovered by a woman in China, whence the industry has spread over the earth; but it certainly was known in Syria at a very early period. You can read about silks in the first books of the Old Testament. Great fame has been attached to the Damascus looms so far back as the art of weaving is known, but until the demand was revived by the Chicago exposition the industry declined in the face of ever-growing European competition. There are now about 10,000 looms in the city, all of the most primitive character, worked by hand and in the households of the people. Fathers, mothers, daughters and sons take turns in weaving, and the silk business, like everything else, goes by families, who sell their product at the bazaars, generally in advance of its manufacture. The merchant who furnishes them with the raw material has a claim upon the fabric. Damascus was equally, or perhaps more, famous at one time for its steel. "Damascus blades" were the finest in the world, and the most beautiful and artistic armor found in the old museums of Europe was manufactured in that city and carried away by the Crusaders. It is lighter but stronger than any ever made since or elsewhere. It is often inlaid with silver and gold and the designs are exquisite. But since the fourteenth century very little cutlery or armor has been manufactured in Damascus, contrary to the popular impression. In 1399 the Tartars invaded and captured the city and compelled the payment of a ransom of 1,000,000 pieces of gold. All the famous armorers were carried away as prisoners and



resumed their art at Samarkand and Khorasan, where it flourishes to this day, while at Damascus it has fallen entirely into oblivion.

The cultivation of poplars for lumber is an extensive industry in Syria. A crop is planted regularly every year. By irrigation the trees grow rapidly, shooting up like stalks of sugar cane, and are kept trimmed so that all the strength of the sap shall go into the trunk and none shall be wasted in branches. You see mile after mile of groves of thin-trunked poplars planted as closely as possible. When they are large enough they are cut close to the ground, shipped to market and the roots are grubbed out for fuel. There is a great demand for roof poles or rafters. The houses in this part of the world, like those in Mexico, are built of adobe—sun-dried clay. The walls are erected, poplar poles are laid across them, covered with brush and then with mud, which contains so much clay that with the use of a little straw it becomes as hard as a brick. The houses may be whitewashed or not, according to the wealth and taste of the owners. They cost very little either in money or labor, and look as if a heavy rain would wash them away, but some of them have endured for centuries.

The housetops are flat and inclosed with low coping from the walls, which is important as a matter of domestic economy, as well as personal comfort. The streets of the towns are very narrow; gardens are rare and hence a flat roof is a great convenience. A great deal takes place up there. The family uses it for a bed-room during the hot summer nights and for a dining-room during the day, also as a place for their devotions, like the Aztec Indians down in Mexico, who climb to the housetop every morning to worship the

sun, and to look for the coming of Montezuma. You will remember that Peter went up on the housetop to pray, and one is continually reminded of that custom when he comes into this country, for when the muezzin appears in the balcony of the minaret to call the hour of prayer, thousands of the faithful climb to their housetops, turn their faces toward Mecca and go through the gymnastic performance which accompanies Mohammedan worship. Farmers spread their grain and vegetables and flax upon the housetops to dry, just as the woman Rahab, you will remember, at Jericho, hid the spies which Joshua sent out from the Jordan under the stalks of flax after she had brought them to the roof of her house. In ordinary houses of Palestine the inmates have no other place to dry their clothes or enjoy the air or do numberless other little things essential to their health and comfort. During the summer evenings, when the day's work is done, half the population are on the housetops.

There are no fences along the railway to Damascus, but a good many hedges of cactus, that add to the resemblance to Mexico, for it is the same variety that you see down there—the nopal that appears on the coat-of-arms of the Mexican Republic. The gods told Montezuma that he must continue his march to the southward until he discovered an eagle sitting upon a cactus, and there he must build a city. The Mexican coat-of-arms represents the picture that Montezuma saw. The nopal grows to vast size in Syria. The peasants dry the leaves and use them for fuel. The fuel question is a very serious one. There is no coal and no timber. The branches of the grape vines, the mulberry and the fig trees are carefully preserved, but go only a little way to supply the demand, and coal is



\$18 to \$20 a ton. The railway company uses artificial bricks made of coal dust, called briquettes. Most of the population use manure for fuel instead of for fertilizer. You notice piles of it in various parts of the town, which are carefully protected and are quite as valuable as an equal bulk of coal or firewood with us. It is spread out until thoroughly dried, and then heaped up under shelter where the wind cannot reach it, and peddled from door to door in great paniers on the backs of donkeys. The biggest manure piles I ever saw are outside the gates of Damascus, near where St. Paul was let down in a basket. I have seen men shoveling the same kind of fuel into the furnaces that heat the sweat-rooms and provide hot water for the Turkish baths.

A few miles west is a great amphitheater called Sukwadi. A steep and rugged mountain range called Jebkasyun, rising about 1,500 feet above the city, forms the northern boundary of the plain and upon its summit is a conspicuous turbet, or tomb of a saint, which commands an extensive and beautiful view. Moslem traditions assert that Adam lived upon this mountain and that the slope below was the scene of the world's first tragedy, the fratricide of Cain, who fled and left the body of his brother in a cavern which is still pointed out; that the redness of the rocks, which some people attribute to the presence of iron, is due to the stains of the blood of Abel. Here, also, according to the same authority, Abraham, the father of the faithful, lived until he was fifty years old—a most unlikely place—and here forsook his idols for the worship of Jehovah, the only true God.

The little village of Riblek is supposed to have been the chief city of the Hittites in patriarchal times.

They were the children of Heth, the second son of Canaan and the great-grandson of Noah, and were most enterprising and influential people, both before and after the conquest of the promised land. Two of Esau's wives were daughters of the Hittites, and Isaac and Rebekah were in a fit of anxiety lest Jacob should follow the example of his erratic brother and pick his bride from among that tribe. It was from Ephron, the Hittite, that Abraham purchased the cave of Machpelah at Hebron when his wife Sarah died. Every foot of the ground in both directions is historic and associated with biblical history. It is well to keep your Bible beside your Baedeker when traveling through Syria.

Not far from the railway is a remarkable natural phenomenon similar to the natural bridge of Virginia, which has received a great deal of attention from geologists, but I cannot find any mention of it in the Bible. It is called Jist-el-hajr (Stone bridge), and is an almost perfect arch, the span being 160 feet and the curve as regular and clean as it might be if it had been built by an engineer. The height is 150 feet; the thickness of the rock above the arch 30 feet, and the breadth on top, where the road passes over it, from 90 to 112 feet.

The irrigation systems along the valley through which the railway passes are very ancient. They date back to the beginning of things, before the time when people began to keep records, before paper and books were invented, when few men knew their own language because there were no books to learn from and the art of writing was undeveloped. We do not know when irrigation was invented. Some historians attribute it to the Chinese, others to the Hindus, but



if the human family originated in the Valley of the Euphrates the first irrigating canals must have been dug there. At least the same streams are now used and the same methods for directing and regulating the flow of the water that were in vogue at the time of Abraham. There has been little change in the implements and habits of the farmers. They plow with the same sort of a crooked stick to-day as they did in the time of Noah, thrash their grain by driving hooped cattled upon it, and winnow it by throwing it in the air to let the breeze blow out the chaff. It is extraordinary how the soil continues to bear. Its fertility is inexhaustible. These valleys have been planted with wheat and other grains for more than 4,000 years that we know of, and yet they continue to yield rich harvests as long as water can reach them.

The farmers do not live upon their land, but in contiguous villages. This custom dates back to the time when it was unsafe for them to do so, and when neighbors gathered together in little communities for better protection. Occasionally there is a case of robbery or kidnapping these days, and during the harvest season particularly the vineyards and the olive groves have to be watched. In some districts the government furnishes the watchmen; in others the land owners organize for the purpose and volunteer to assist each other. All these arrangements are reduced to a system, and follow the customs of centuries. The high walls about every house and every farm-yard indicate very plainly that live stock and other portable property are not always safe. But the farmers have more to fear from the government officials than from any other source. They are oppressed beyond all conception. The original tax upon farms is one-tenth of all they produce,

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but the tax-gatherer regulates the amount to suit himself, and sometimes seizes half of the harvest.

Caravans of donkeys and camels still compete with the railroad and are continually moving along the old highway between Beirut and Damascus loaded with all kinds of freight, grain, cotton, silk, machinery, fuel, poplar trees, dry goods, merchandise of every sort, but petroleum seems to be the popular cargo. We counted hundreds of camels and donkeys loaded with tin cans of Russian petroleum made at Batoum, and every case, for some reason or another, was marked with English words. It is bringing the old and the new together when you load a camel with kerosene oil.

The right of way of the railroad is fenced off with barbed wire, and all persons are forbidden to intrude thereon. A guard is kept at every crossing, although there are only two trains daily each way, one for freight and the other for passengers. Donkeys, cattle, goats, sheep and sometimes camels get over into the track from the roadway, and while we were going up to Damascus a drove of burros violated the regulation. The engine, as it came around the curve, struck one of them and threw it, load and all, a hundred feet or more. The animal did not seem to be injured in body, but its pride was deeply wounded, and it lifted up its voice and wailed. A donkey can put a great deal of pathos into its yeehaw! yeehaw! The train was stopped. The conductor got off, and with the assistance of the guards arrested the man in charge of the donkeys and brought him to Damascus, leaving the caravan to take care of itself; but I suppose the next caravan driver who came along, and the road was full of them, took charge of the animals for his friend.



There are many natural curiosities along the way, but it is inconvenient for people to stop and see them, the country being without hotels and conveniences of travel. So we can only read about them in the guide books between stations and imagine what they look like. In that charming description of life in Syria called "The Land and the Book," by Rev. Dr. Thompson, who was a missionary there for fifty-five years and traveled about so much that he knew every inch of the ground, there is a singular story concerning a so-called Sabbatical River somewhere on the journey between Beirut and Damascus—a river that runs only one day in the week, and that on Sunday, and is entirely dry for the other six days. Josephus described it with great detail in his account of the journey of the Emperor Titus through Palestine. Pliny, who was the most famous naturalist of his time, gives it considerable attention. Dr. Thompson says that he discovered it in 1840, and furnishes an ingenious explanation of the phenomenon. Josephus declares that the river is dry from Monday to Saturday and runs only on Sunday. Pliny reverses the proposition and makes it run six days in the week and rest every seventh day, according to the injunction of the fourth commandment. Dr. Thompson declares that it rests two days out of every three and runs on a part of the third day only. The monks in the neighboring monastery told him, so Dr. Thompson says, that every third day St. George, their patron saint, descends into the fountain and forces the water out with a loud noise to irrigate the extensive plantations belonging to their order. The cave out of which the river issues is at the base of a hill of limestone involved in a formation of traprock, "and it is well known," Dr. Thompson con-

tinues, "that subterranean reservoirs of water are sometimes drained by intermitting fountains acting upon the principle of the siphon. If the supply were greater or exactly equal to the capacity of the pool, it would always be full and there would be no intermission. The periods of intermission and size of the stream depend upon the capacity of the pool. If, in the time of Josephus, as the latter declares, it required six days to fill the pool and the siphon could exhaust it in one, we have the conditions to sustain his statement, a river running only on the seventh day. If, on the other hand, it required six days to draw off the water we have the conditions for the phenomenon mentioned by Pliny."

I was not able to find this extraordinary river, nor does anybody of whom I made inquiries in Damascus know anything about it; neither the consul nor the guides at the hotels, nor other persons who are familiar with the country.

The Greeks formerly called this part of Syria Phoenicia, the "land of palms," because those trees were lovelier and more numerous here than anywhere else in the East. The palm has been accepted by all the eastern nations as the highest type of grace and beauty. The columns of the temples erected in Egypt in the days of the Pharaohs, and afterward in Greece, in Palmyra, Babylon, Nineveh, and then in Rome, were modeled in imitation of the trunk of the palm, and the most beautiful of the daughters of Israel were named after the tree. The daughter of David and the daughter of Absalom were called "Tamar," which is a synonym for palm, and the name is still common among the women of Syria. You will find palm branches used extensively in all the decorations of the



Egyptians and the ancient artists of the East, and they were held as emblems of honor among the Hebrews, as the laurel among the Romans and Greeks. For that reason the people spread palm branches in the path of the Saviour when He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

The olive also is a beautiful tree, and better than the palm, because it is modest, useful and enduring. Its shade is deep and grateful, while the palm casts none. The fruit of the olive is the mainstay of the people, indispensable to the poorer classes of the community. The farmer and the laborer leave their homes in the morning with no other provision than a loaf of bread and a package of pickled olives wrapped up in leaves. That is their daily dinner, and it satisfies them. The oil of the olive is a substitute for butter and lard, and is needed for the cooking of almost every dish, while until recently it was the chief illuminating power of the eastern communities. Kerosene is rapidly replacing it, owing to the cheap price at which it is sold. The entire supply of soap used in Syria is made of olive oil.

The olive tree has a very slow growth; it bears no berries for seven years, and the crop scarcely pays for the gathering until the tree is ten years old, but it will continue to yield abundantly for centuries, to extreme old age, and requires but little care. So long as there is a mere fragment of the trunk remaining green shoots will burst out and yield oily berries. There are knobs or large warts on the body of the trees. If you will cut one of them off, plant it in good soil, give it plenty of water and sunshine, it will strike out roots and grow. Large trees in a good season will yield from fifteen to twenty bushels of olives, which are good for

ten or twelve gallons of oil. The oil is made by crushing the olives under hydraulic pressure. By an ancient custom the olive groves around Damascus are guarded by official watchmen to prevent the trees from being stripped by thieves. But each year the governor, or some magistrate, issues a proclamation warning all owners of olive trees that they must pick their fruit, for after a certain date it becomes public property. If a farmer has his crop only half gathered when that date arrives the public will gather it for him.

The train approaches Damascus through a narrow valley, almost a gorge, at the bottom of which is a roaring stream known nowadays as the Barada, but formerly the Abana. This pride of the country comes from a wonderful spring, which, summer and winter gushes out of the rocks at the rate of several hundred gallons a minute, and goes bounding over its rocky bed, foaming and roaring as if rejoicing to reach the sunshine after confinement in some subterranean reservoir. Since the days of Naaman, the leper, this stream has been famous. You will remember that he was a great captain of Damascus, and the Bible says "he was also a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper." At the earnest solicitation of a servant in his family, "a little captive maid out of the land of Israel," he went to Samaria to find the Prophet Elisha and be cured. He took with him ten talents of silver, 6,000 pieces of gold, ten changes of raiment and a letter of introduction from the King of Damascus to Jehoram, the King of Israel. But Elisha merely told him to go and wash seven times in Jordan. Naaman was indignant at what he considered contemptuous treatment and exclaimed: "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of



Israel?" So he turned and went away in a rage. But you will remember that he dipped in the Jordan seven times all the same, as the prophet told him, and when Elisha refused to receive a "blessing," as Naaman called his gift—they call it baksheesh now—the great soldier asked for "two mules' burden of earth" to build an altar at Damascus, so that he might make sacrifices to Elisha's God.

The house of Naaman is still pointed out to tourists. It is one of the most picturesque and ancient structures in Damascus and quite appropriately is used for a leper hospital. I don't wonder that Naaman was disgusted, for anyone who has seen both Jordan and Abana would naturally feel the same way. Abana is a clear, cold, crystal stream. Jordan is turgid and muddy.

Abana's powerful current drives numerous mills, which we can see from the windows of the railway train, and the entrances of all of them are surrounded with groups of mules, donkeys and camels, which have brought little loads of grain to the mill to be ground, as in the olden time, between antiquated millstones revolving upon a wooden axle. Some of them are centuries old; perhaps they may date as far back as the days of the prophets, for water was used as a motive power in their time, and this very highway, which follows the Abana River to the mills, was often trod by the feet of Abraham.

I must ask the reader to excuse these digressions and go back with me to the late residence of Adam, so that we may enter the old city in due and proper order. The valley through which the railway approaches Damascus is called Ghutah, and is said to be the most fertile in Syria, being freely watered by the Abana and other rivers which bring life and carry away decay.

There are about 150 square miles of brilliant fields and meadows, just now looking fresh and vivid, broken here and there by orchards of olive trees and figs and other fruits. Just before reaching the city there is a group of villas occupied by exiles, pashas and other officers of the Turkish government, who by some act or another have offended the sultan, or through the reports of spies have excited the suspicion of their imperial master, who has sent them to Damascus, where they can be closely watched. It is considered a great act of forbearance for him to banish them here instead of sending them to Bagdad or some of the other cities of the interior that are much farther out of the modern world and have very few of the attractions of Damascus. It is lucky for most of them that they were allowed to go anywhere at all, but the present sultan is very merciful. He does not often behead one of his former servants.

Fuad Pasha, while we were in Damascus, arrived to add another distinguished victim of the sultan's spy system to the Damascus colony. Everybody who knew him, particularly the ambassadors and ministers and other foreign residents of Constantinople, testify that he was a loyal and honorable man and that the sultan made a great mistake in believing the falsehoods that have been told about him. But if reports are true other exiles are equally worthy of the sultan's confidence, and their punishment is equally unjust. The villas which these exiles occupy belong to the government. Most of them are comfortable and well situated. There are no more desirable residences in Syria, and if anyone is compelled to live in Turkey he could not choose a pleasanter place.

There was a great tumult at the railway station as



the train rolled in. Everybody in Damascus seemed to have come down to give us a welcome, and the vociferation of the railway officials, the hackmen, the policemen and the porters was enough to frighten a nervous person out of his wits. Trains have been arriving and departing from the old city for more than six years, and yet the people do not seem to get used to the novelty. Every idle man in town makes it his business to come down to the station every day at train time. Fences have been built to bar them from the platform, and yet they will gather an hour before and stand behind the barricade six or eight rows deep for the pleasure of witnessing the arrival of the cars and the movements of the passengers. We managed to force our way through the crowd with the hotel porter guiding us, found some carriages and drove through the dusty streets to a very comfortable hotel—one of the best we found in the East.





#### IV

### The Oldest City We Know





## IV

### THE OLDEST CITY WE KNOW

There may be older cities than Damascus in China and India, but we do not know them, and we do know that there are none more venerable on this side of the world. Its origin is lost in the mist of the early ages, but was pretty close to the beginning of things. According to Moslem tradition the foundations were laid soon after the creation of the earth, and Adam was one of the original town-site owners. After his expulsion from Eden he crossed the desert from the valley of the Euphrates with his family, and settled in the valley of the Barada, which he preferred to Paradise in many respects. There is a difference in taste about places, just as there is about people and food and jokes, and it must be said in defense of Adam that he had not seen much of the world. Mohammed never entered the City of Damascus. He first caught sight of it from the top of a hill in the suburbs. A temple stands there now to mark the spot. He gazed and gazed and gazed, enraptured with the scene, and then, making the greatest sacrifice of his life, turned away and would not enter the gates. "Man can have but one paradise," he remarked to his companion, "and mine is above."

There is a charming view from Mohammed's Temple. There is no doubt of it. The landscape is lovely and the domes and minarets, the towers and the roofs of the city are wonderfully fascinating; but, according to our notion, there can be no Eden without a good

deal more turf and foliage and flowers than can be found around Damascus. At the same time it is one of the best shaded cities in Syria. The valley is well watered and there are a good many groves in the neighborhood, while at this season of the year the entire surface of the country is livid with the young shoots of wheat that are giving their greeting to the sun. To the dwellers in the desert, therefore, Damascus must have a refreshing and grateful appearance, and so much of the surface of the earth in this section is covered with sand that we who live in an endless oasis cannot fully appreciate the feelings and the pride of the Syrians in their metropolis.

The view of Damascus from a minaret is worth a long climb, and the central minaret, called Madinet el 'Arus (the minaret of the bride), has a spiral stairway of 160 steps to the gallery, from which the muezzin cries the hour of prayer. A still higher minaret is called Madinet Isa (the minaret of Jesus), because of a prophecy that on the last day Jesus will descend from heaven to its balcony and there sit in judgment upon all the nations of the earth. The view from that gallery over the most Oriental of all cities is exceedingly interesting, although disappointing. There is a lack of color, and none of the gilded spires and domes that brighten up the Russian cities. The roofs of the houses are flat and the color of clay. The streets are narrow and it is difficult to trace them. There is very little foliage, and the Oriental gardens that you read about, with their splashing fountains, figs, orange and palm trees, are very few. They are there, of course, in sufficient number to justify the description, but not so numerous as readers of books on oriental life have a right to expect. The corrugated iron roofs that



mark the bazaars give a peculiar appearance to the scene. They are so new and modern and so unlike the rest of the city, and some of them shine like tin pans around the dairy of an Iowa farm. Occasionally a new building rises from among the old ones in a most impertinent and aggressive manner, and looks very large and very bold in a coat of new orange paint, which is the favorite color. The expenditure of a few carloads of calcimine upon the walls of Damascus would bring the city nearer to the ideal we had formed of it, and even whitewash would go a good ways. The tone is dull and dreary, a monotonous area of mud-colored roofs and walls, only broken here and there by minarets and domes of a similar shade. The domes mark Turkish bathhouses as well as places of worship, and sometimes khans or wholesale places of trade.

The outlook beyond and around the city is lovely, and extends to the ranges of mountains inclosing the fertile valley in which Damascus stands—a vast and diversified landscape, hills and valleys, hopeless deserts, vivid fields of wheat, pastures of grayish green, almost the same color as the olive groves, and here and there the plumage of a cluster of palms. It is certainly a most beautiful prospect when compared with its sandy and rocky surroundings, but if it were in the neighborhood of Newport or Lake Forest, or Madison, Wis., and many other places I might name, one wouldn't look at the view from Damascus a second time.

Kaiser William of Germany, like the Roman emperors, always erects monuments or tablets wherever he goes, and during his visit to Palestine in 1898 he scattered them quite freely over the country.

## 88 TO-DAY IN SYRIA AND PALESTINE

Upon one of the foothills of the Anti-Lebanon Mountains from which he viewed the landscape I have described, he erected a stately shaft and engraved upon it an inscription expressing his august approval of the picture that nature had spread out before him.

Josephus informs us that Damascus was founded by Uz, the grandson of Shem and the great-grandson of Noah, and accepts the tradition that Abraham invaded the country from the land of the Chaldeans and ruled as King of Damascus. There is no reason to believe that Abraham ever reigned here, but the best Biblical authorities assert that the city lay on the line of his migration from Ur of the Chaldees into the land of Caanan, and it is quite possible that he may have remained a considerable time in the neighborhood. Eliezer, his steward, and until the birth of Isaac the heir to his property, was a Damascus man, as the Bible tells us, and we know from the same authority that he fought King Chedorlaomer in this country. Damascus is frequently mentioned in the book of Genesis, and Mesjid Ibrahim, where Abraham erected an altar and gave thanks to God for his victory, is still a sacred shrine venerated by all the many sects in Syria. After the time of Abraham there is no further notice of Damascus in the Bible until the reign of David, a period of nearly nine hundred years, for David's expansion policy soon brought him into hostile collision with the people of Damascus. He slew two and twenty thousand of them, "and the Syrians became servants to David and brought gifts." Possession lasted only during his lifetime, for when Solomon came to the throne the Damascenes threw off the yoke and regained their independence. There was



continuous war between them and Israel, however, and a great deal of space in the Bible is taken up relating the bloody events that occurred.

Damascus, however, is not in the Holy Land. It is not a part of the heritage of Israel, although it was the goal of all the great thoroughfares and the envy of the Jewish people. It has seen the rise and fall of many empires. It was old when Jerusalem was founded and it flourishes still when the great cities of the Jews have perished. During all the successive civilizations and religions which have supplanted each other for four thousand years, the old city has remained intact as if possessed of the secret of perpetual youth, perhaps because, as a market and a trading place, it is alike indispensable to the civilization along the Mediterranean coast and the nomad tribes of the interior. In its bazaars for more than forty centuries the traders of the East and the traders of the West have met to exchange merchandise. It occupies a remarkable site on the edge of the great Assyrian desert, and its preservation is a phenomenon, for the most enduring city in the world is entirely incapable of defense. It was once surrounded by a great wall, a part of which is still preserved, but was never much protection against an enemy. Invaders have come one after the other and occupied Damascus as their own. Dynasties have arisen and made it their capital, erected palaces and temples and embellished its dwellings and have passed away. All the great generals of Oriental fame have captured it, made it their headquarters and departed. More history has been written in Damascus than in any other place. It has been a harbor of refuge upon the desert, the earliest sea that mankind learned to navigate, the source of the

supplies of the Bedouins, the terminus of the voyages of the "fleets of the desert," the market for the merchandise of all the East.

Centuries before England had an organized government or the name of Germany was known, Damascus was carrying on a profitable trade with Peking and other cities of China. Even before the time of Moses it was visited by the Pharaohs, who came all the way from Egypt to look upon the wonders and grandeur of this great commercial capital. There are objects in Damascus older than the pyramids, and the secret of their endurance has been their defenseless but useful position.

Damascus was one of the cities that escaped the relentless fanaticism of the crusaders and was afterward the capital of Saladin, whose tomb is just outside of the famous mosque of Omayyade. It is sheltered by a charming little temple, occupied by a company of Moslem monks, who are required to maintain perpetual prayer for the repose of his soul. There are many Catholic convents in which perpetual adoration is the rule, but I understand that this is the only place in all the world of Islam where such a practice is observed. It is not, the priests told me, because Saladin was such a bad man that they need to pray perpetually for him, but it is an act of adoration, the highest honor that can be paid. He was the greatest of all the Saracen warriors, the greatest hero of romance and chivalry in the Middle Ages, and drove the crusaders from the Holy Land. He was the master of Syria, made Damascus his capital, surrounded it with new fortifications, caused mosques, schools and fountains to be built and founded the first court of justice, in which he often sat himself. There is no greater



hero in Moslem history or tradition except the prophet himself.

In this little tomb Saladin's son lies by his side. His wife is buried in one of the ordinary cemeteries of the city. The sarcophagus of the great warrior is built of wood, covered with black broadcloth heavily embroidered with silver, and cashmere shawls of exquisite texture.

At the head of the sarcophagus is a faded bouquet of flowers carefully preserved under a globe of glass. They were placed there by Kaiser William II. of Germany, during his visit to Damascus in 1898, and have remained there ever since. After his departure and return to Berlin he sent an ornamental wreath of silver gilt and of elaborate design to replace the bouquet, but the monks in charge of the place would not admit it, because among the decorations was a Maltese cross. The disposition of the wreath was a matter of serious consideration, until some ingenious person suggested that they build a little bay window to the temple to contain it, which was done. That projection is not on consecrated ground; it lies outside the temple, although it is a part of the same building and is divided from the tomb only by a partition of glass. But the holy place was preserved from profanation and due honor was paid to the kaiser's gift.

Near the East Gate of the City of Damascus are several interesting places associated with Scriptural history. A large dilapidated building, now used as a hospital for leprosy and other contagious diseases, is said to have once been the palace of Naaman, the leper, who was cured by Elisha. Biblical students are inclined to think that the hospital may occupy the same site as Naaman's Palace. It is considered very

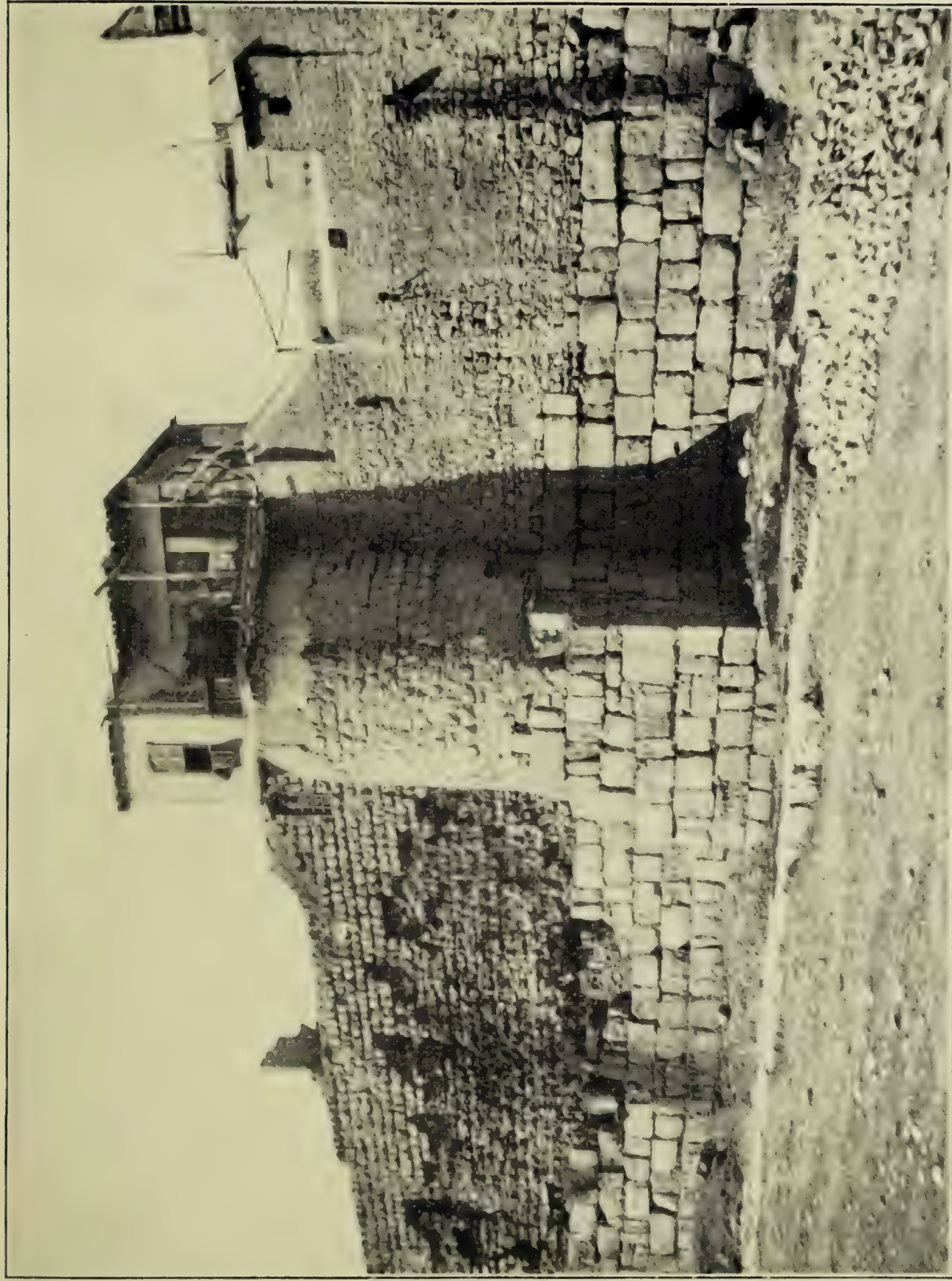
likely that more than one structure has been erected and crumbled upon those foundations since the great Syrian general washed in the waters of the Jordan.

A little farther in the other direction is a tower on the wall known as St. Paul's Tower, for there, according to tradition, the apostle was let down through a window in a basket, as he informs us in his second letter to the Corinthians, and escaped the vengeance of the governor. An Arab lady with a brilliant costume stared at us out of the window of the tower, and observing our kodaks pointed that way, requested us to send her a photograph. The atmosphere in that vicinity is polluted by enormous piles of manure, which cover a large area along the walls, and every now and then are stirred up in order to dry. The stuff is used for fuel and not for fertilizer.

Across the street are the cemeteries of the various Christian denominations, one of them being especially notable for the tomb of St. George, who killed the dragon. I was not able to discover any evidence to sustain the claim that the patron saint of Great Britain is buried there, but it is defended with great confidence by Moslems, Greeks and Roman Catholics, notwithstanding the almost positive testimony in favor of Lydda, the town in which St. George was born and lived and suffered martyrdom, and where a church erected in his honor has been standing since the time of Constantine. Lydda is on the highway between Jaffa and Jerusalem and was one of the chief citadels of the Crusaders.

The tomb of St. George in the Damascus cemetery is a rude edifice, inclosed by a cheap wooden fence in order to protect it from relic hunters. The grave, which is walled up with brick and smeared with





THE WALL AT DAMASCUS, WHERE ST. PAUL WAS LET DOWN.





cement, is the shrine of many devotees of all the religious sects. It seems to be revered by Mohammedans quite as much as by Christians, and offerings of flowers are constantly placed there.

In a neighboring cemetery is the tomb of Henry Thomas Buckle, the eminent English historian, who died in 1862.

The site of the conversion of St. Paul, who, as he came near Damascus, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," and with a warrant from the high priest to arrest any men or women who believed in Jesus, "and bring them bound unto Jerusalem," met the Holy One himself, and was stricken with blindness, was formerly located at the village of Kaukab, about six miles southwest of Damascus on the road to Galilee. During the last half century, however, the monks have removed it to a more convenient locality, near the window in the wall, the house of Naaman and the tomb of St. George, so that pilgrims can visit all three places in the same day. Four other spots have enjoyed the honor at different periods.

Within five minutes' walk also is the house of "a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias," to whom the Lord appeared in a vision and instructed him to "go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold he prayeth." And Ananias cured Paul of blindness, baptized him and sent him on his way to preach the gospel and "confound the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ."

The house of Ananias is within the city walls and belongs to the Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity, who

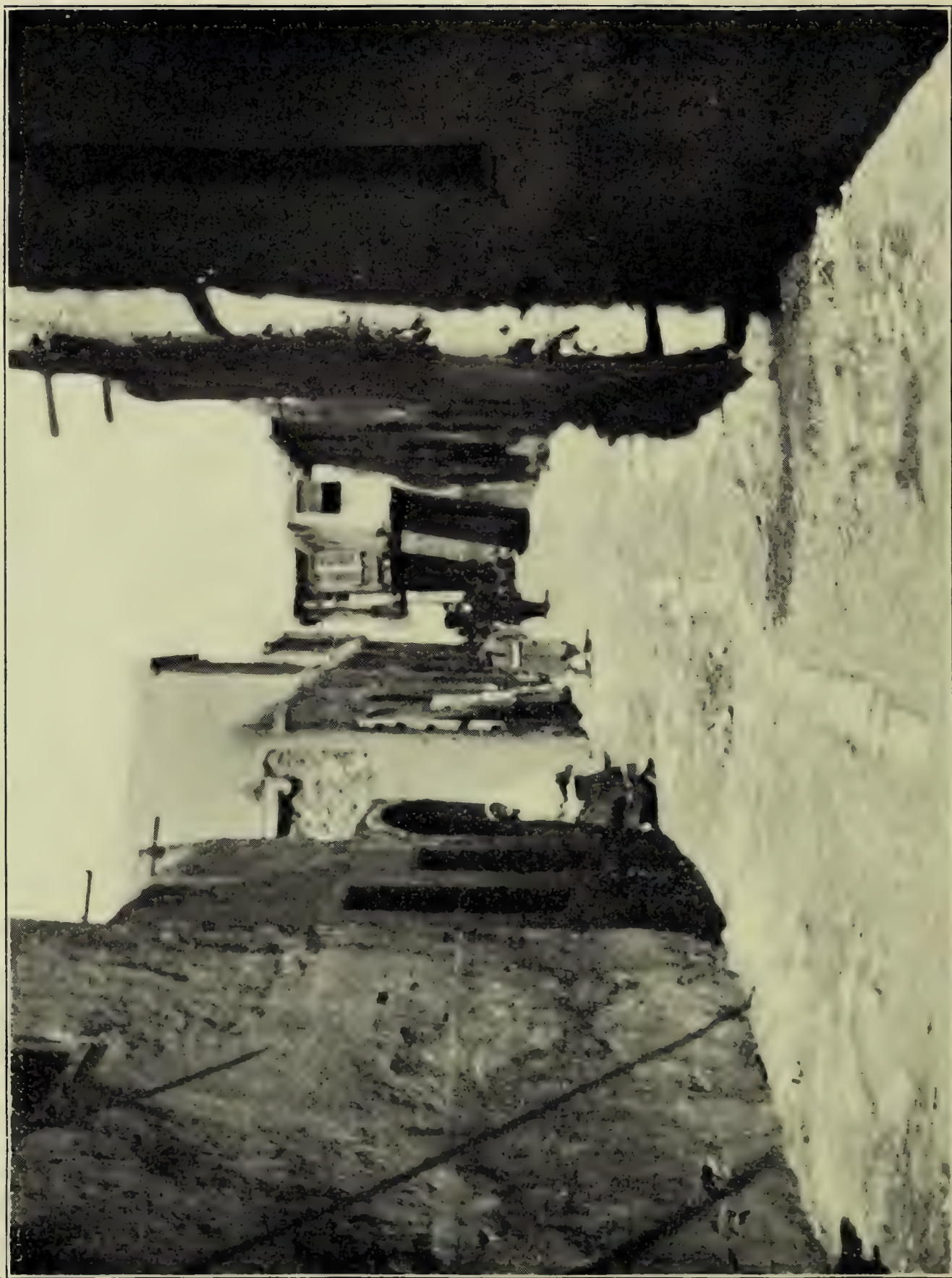
have preserved it with tender care, and keep it in beautiful order, as they do other things. There is a damp little chapel underground, in which the Christians used to meet secretly for worship during the persecution period. The houses of Judas are near by. The Greeks have one and the Roman Catholics have another, and probably the claims of both for authenticity are worthless. All these holy places are situated in what is known as the Christian quarter, where the Roman Catholics, the Protestants, the Armenians, the Orthodox Greeks and the Greek Catholics have convents and schools. During the massacre of 1860 nearly all that part of the city was destroyed. The buildings were looted and burned, and their occupants were murdered in the streets by the hundreds.

Outside the walls, near a little village held sacred by the Mohammedans, is a place where Abraham is said to have accepted the doctrine of the unity of God. His father was a heathen, and worshiped many heathen deities, but Abraham, according to one of the most beautiful passages in the Koran, beheld a brilliant star, which he followed to that place, as the wise men followed the Star of Bethlehem, and there received a vision which convinced him that there was only one true God, the Creator and the Father of all things. The footprints of Abraham are still shown in the rock.

At the village of Jobar, about two miles farther down the road, is a synagogue occupying the spot where Elijah anointed Elisha to be a prophet, and beyond it is a little cavern in the rock where Elijah was fed by the ravens. There are several other caves in different parts of Palestine which claim the same honor and disputes over their authenticity become very warm at times.







"THE STREET THAT IS CALLED STRAIGHT." DAMASCUS.



"The street which is called Straight" still goes by that name, and is the most important thoroughfare of Damascus. It is much wider than any other street in the city, although its name is a misnomer, for it has several turns. A tradition that it was once lined on both sides with a colonnade and separate avenues for foot passengers and for chariots is confirmed by ruins that have been excavated at various places. It is now about one hundred feet wide, and for a mile or more is well built up and occupied by the best shops in the city outside of the bazaars.

The Jewish quarter is on one side of this famous street, and the Christian quarter on the other. The Jewish quarter is said to be the oldest part of the city, and all historians agree that it has been continuously occupied by the ancestors of the present inhabitants from the time of the Babylonian captivity, at least. Several of the synagogues date back to the time of Paul, and the Hebrew colony have perpetuated the language and religion, their costumes, manners and customs without material change to the present day. Nowhere in the world, it is claimed, has there been for thousands of years so little variation in the mode of life as in the Jewish quarter of Damascus, and if the houses now occupied were not standing at the time of David, they occupy the same sites, and in many cases the same foundations, of those that stood then.

Damascus is 2,260 feet above the sea level, and the population is estimated all the way between 250,000 and 500,000. There has never been a census. It is, however, much less than formerly. It is believed that there were as many as 2,000,000 population as far back as the seventh century, when it was the capital of the world. At least one-third of the inhabitants are

Mohammedans, and it is the popular opinion that ten per cent are Orthodox Greek, ten per cent Jews, five per cent Greek Catholics, 700 or 800 Roman Catholics and about 1,000 Protestants, mostly foreigners. There are only two American families, both missionaries. Dr. Crawford has been living there for forty-four years, formerly as the representative of the American Board of Foreign Missions, but of late years working with the Irish Presbyterians, to whom the field was surrendered.

There is a Presbyterian church of 144 communicants and a congregation averaging 300, mostly converts from the Greeks. There have been no converts from the Mohammedans nor from the Jews since the Protestants have been in this community. Nor could I find that any impression has been made upon the members of either religion, although their children and young men and women frequently attend the Protestant schools, accept treatment at their hospitals and enjoy the fruits of their benevolence. In the neighborhood of Damascus are ten native congregations of Protestants and schools with native teachers. In the city there is a school for girls with about sixty scholars. The British Syrian Mission maintains four schools and an asylum for the blind. The Roman Catholics have a college at which a good education is furnished in the French language under the direction of the Franciscan monks. The Sisters of Charity have a small hospital, a girls' school with about 250 pupils and an orphanage with forty or fifty inmates. Other denominations have schools also, both for boys and girls. The Orthodox Greeks are particularly active in educational matters, and the Jews take considerable pride in their schools.

Several Syrian merchants in Damascus have spent



much time in the United States and returned to their birthplace with considerable wealth. There is a constant stream of emigration also from the old city to the new world, and it is asserted that not less than 1,000 Damascenes reside in Chicago alone. The trade is comparatively small, although it is growing, the direct result of the World's Fair at Chicago.

The Damascenes are very fond of their city, but they are notorious for their intolerance, fanaticism and cruelty. The Moslems are illiterate and proud. They realize the advancement and the superiority of the West and the comparative insignificance of Damascus in the affairs of the world at present, after having occupied so conspicuous a position for forty centuries, and cannot conceal or repress their resentment. They consider themselves superior to other nations, and their helplessness makes them jealous and vindictive instead of stimulating them to enterprise. While foreigners are safe in Damascus if they observe the proprieties, they are not allowed in several parts of the city and are apt to be insulted wherever they may go. We were warned against attending the theater for fear we might be jostled and otherwise treated rudely; we were cautioned not to go into any of the mosques without a military escort; we were advised that people were making unpleasant comments upon us as we wandered through the bazaars, but as we did not understand the language it made no difference, and no one offered the slightest violence or showed evidences of hostility.

Damascus is the residence of the governor of the province of Suriya (Syria) and of the mushir (general in command) of the Fifth Army Corps, who has a garrison of about 5,000 men under his command. Municipal affairs are managed by a town council elected by

the people, which includes several Orthodox Greek Christians and Jews, but the system of assessment and the collection of taxes is atrocious and extortionate, amounting to legalized robbery. Moslems suffer very little in that respect, but the Christians and Jews are the victims of all forms of official corruption and blackmail. The different trades, both mercantile and artisan, are organized into guilds and occupy certain sections of the bazaars. The guilds are managed very much like trade unions in the United States, and it is difficult for a newcomer to obtain work or to engage in business unless he belongs to one of them. It is impossible for him to follow his trade or continue in business unless he obeys all their regulations and observes their time-honored customs. The hack drivers, the porters at the railway stations, and even the beggars, have a guild.

There are no public buildings in Damascus. The governor lives in the suburbs and for business purposes occupies a part of a small and uninviting-looking structure belonging to the municipality. There used to be an old citadel, erected in the Middle Ages, with a palace and a harem attached, but it was torn away some years ago and a new palace is to be erected in its place. Some of the foundations are laid and there is a good deal of cut stone on the ground, but construction does not seem to advance. It is said that the money is lacking, which is probably true. There is no money in Turkey for public purposes and private individuals who have funds have found by experience that it is not expedient to display them for fear of exciting the cupidity of tax collectors and other officials. No man dare invest much capital in any line of business. When Kaiser William was here in 1898, and his visit



marks the most important epoch in Syrian history in modern times, he was lodged in an old private residence, which, by the sultan's orders, was fitted up for his accommodation. The sultan did not accompany him. When I asked our guide the reason for his absence he replied: "Sultan can't come. If sultan leave Constantinople they would change him." And when I asked another person why his imperial majesty never visited Damascus, he looked up with some surprise at my ignorance and remarked laconically: "He would lose his place."

There are numerous old barracks in various parts of the city and several fine new structures of enormous size of stone painted yellow recently erected. They are the only modern improvements that the old town boasts. I have noticed everywhere in Turkey that fortifications and military barracks are the only objects upon which the government spends money.

In the suburbs, out on a hill where Mohammed is said to have gazed over the city, is a group of mud dwellings lately built. They contain a colony of Mohammedans from Crete, who moved away from that island after it was given back to Greece, because they would not live under a Christian government. The sultan invited them to Syria, built the houses they occupy and gave them lands from the public domain on the borders of the desert, which they are now preparing to occupy and till. It is quite a singular incident that any persons should refuse to live under Christian authority. I believe that there is no precedent. They are said to be industrious and intelligent people, but very fanatical in their religious belief. A group of the women and children of the settlement gathered around and watched us curiously

as we were enjoying the view of the city, but the women kept their faces closely covered, and the children did not ask for baksheesh, as is the practice in Damascus and other Turkish cities. That alone was enough to stamp them as strangers.

Rev. Dr. Jessup, who has lived in Syria for half a century and is recognized as an authority upon all subjects, says that while the present houses of Damascus may not have been standing in the days of Abraham or even at the time of Paul, they are undoubted counterparts of the houses which occupied their sites at those periods. None other of the ancient cities of the East have preserved their individuality like Damascus, and not only have the manners and customs of ancient times been retained, but many of its present inhabitants are the descendants of the people who have lived and done business there from the earliest ages, and dwell in the same locations that have been occupied by their families century after century.

It is asserted that the leading families of Damascus, who are descendants of Ishmael, can trace their lineage back farther than the representatives of any race except the Jews; and that in the bazaars of this old city may be found Hebrews whose pedigrees run back for thousands of years. They wear to day the style of costumes, made of the same materials, as were worn by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Nowhere else in Palestine have the Jews retained such an unbroken line of descent and uninterrupted occupation. They are the Hebrews of the Hebrews, and have adhered with great tenacity to the customs as well as the costumes of their forefathers of the Biblical age. Memphis, Palmyra, Nineveh, Baalbek and even Antioch have fallen, and the people who abode therein have disappeared into







A MOHAMMEDAN CEMETERY. DAMASCUS.



oblivion or become extinct, but Damascus, unlike her rivals, has maintained the even tenor of her way, regardless of siege and sacking, of revolution and invasion, and is to-day, in most respects, the best living illustration of the scenes described in the Old Testament that can be found in any part of the East. There are said also to be types of a larger number of Eastern races than can be found in any city except Constantinople — Turks, Jews, Arabs, Assyrians, Greeks, Armenians, Egyptians and representatives of all the tribes of the desert, of all the various clans which occupied the country at the time of the Israelitish invasion, from the Kurds of the North to the Abyssinians of the South.

Although the exterior appearance of Damascus is uninviting, there are some very fine houses, from an Oriental point of view, and they are famous for the luxurious style in which they are fitted up. Through introductions from the American consul we had the privilege of inspecting three of the most beautiful residences, all of which were erected 200 or 300 years ago and are of the very highest type of Saracenic architecture. Two of the houses belong to Mohammedans, one a pasha and the other a merchant, and the third was the home of a wealthy Jew whose ancestors had lived there for several generations. The exterior walls are of rough mud without windows, and resemble the ordinary wall that protects gardens in the country. The entrance is through unpretending doors which open into a narrow vestibule with a porter's lodge adjoining, and without the knowledge and consent of the porter no one can obtain admission or leave the house. A second door from the vestibule opens upon a beautiful court. In some of the houses it was at

least sixty feet square, and in none of them less than thirty. The court is paved with slabs of black and white marble, with borders of tessellated work in pretty patterns of Arabic figures. In the middle is a fountain of carved marble, octagonal in shape and profusely ornamented. The walls rise two or three feet above the pavement; the water plays with considerable force, and fish of all kinds are swimming about in the basin. Around it flowers and plants in pots are arranged, and each of the courts contains several orange, lemon and other fruit trees, with rose bushes, jessamine and other vines.

On the sunny side of the court, and facing the fountain, is a large recess, with divans around the three walls, with narghiles, cigarettes and other smoking apparatus upon a center table. The divans are upholstered in Damascus silks and above a wainscoting of beautiful blue Persian tiles the walls and ceiling are covered with gilded moldings in stucco of very elaborate design. This recess is used for a reception-room and occupied by the family as a sitting-room during the hot weather. The "company-rooms" open off from it through large doors, one on either side, and are fitted up in the same style and decorated in a similar manner. The ceilings are frescoed with bright Oriental colors, glaring yellows and purples, Pompeiian reds and pinks, blues, greens of barbaric brightness; or are formed of slender trunks of poplar trees, polished or painted in bright colors or gilded. The walls of the two "company-rooms" are covered with mirrors and gold stucco work. In one of the houses we visited the walls of the drawing-room were veneered with little bits of mirrors of irregular shape, set into cement, and the spaces between them are gilded.



Panels of tortoise shell, mother-of-pearl and even silver are not uncommon, and the brilliancy of the effect is heightened by edgings and tracery of red. The upholstery is of silk of brilliant colors, and wide divans, upon which the host and the guests sat without shoes, with their legs crossed, sipping their coffee and eating sweetmeats and gossiping, were covered with Persian rugs of silk such as would bring thousands of dollars in the New York or Chicago market. The whole effect is one of exceeding brilliancy, although not entirely to our modern taste. It seemed strange and incongruous to find "Crown Jewel" and "Columbian" base burning coal stoves of American manufacture in these gorgeous apartments. The dining-rooms are similar in size and style, complications of elaborate decoration, costly materials and Oriental magnificence, and the owners took great pride in exhibiting them. The apartments for the use of the family and for domestic purposes, the bed-rooms, kitchens, baths and so forth are equally handsome, and beautiful gardens are attached to two of the houses, which no one would have suspected from the outside. We saw no books or pianos or other musical instruments, except in the Jewish home, where there seemed to be evidences of modern taste and accomplishments.

At the Mohammedan houses we were detained in the vestibule until the ladies of the family had retired to the harem upon the second floor, but in the Jewish house we were cordially welcomed by the wife, mother, daughter and sister of our host, who seemed to take great interest in showing us around and explaining the mysteries of a Damascus mansion.

Next to the Druses the Kurds are said to be the most enterprising people in Damascus. Saladin, the great-

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est of sultans, the greatest of Saracen warriors, who stands next to Mohammed in the veneration of the people, was a Kurd.

In the center of Damascus is a large open square used as a general public market and a place of assembly for all classes of citizens. There is a monument in the center, with a large fountain. Carriages and saddle horses, carts, camels and donkeys are standing near by for hire, and around the edge of the square are stands of itinerant traders, whose wares are spread out before them on the ground in the most inviting manner possible. Back of them are professional letter writers, who may also be found in the courtyards of the mosques and other places where people are accustomed to congregate. Each has a desk under a rude awning of straw matting or canvas or in the shadow of the wall. He sits cross-legged, with an inkhorn in his girdle and a bunch of reeds or wooden pens before him. He writes letters for all sorts of customers, draws contracts, prepares affidavits and papers and records of various kinds. His services are necessary because so few of the people can write and only a small proportion of them are able to sign their names. Hence the professional letter writer, like lawyers in the United States, has regular customers, who by necessity intrust him with the secrets of their business, and he is a father confessor to many Moslem women also, who come to him with their confidences and through him send messages of love or hate.

Oriental letters are always expressed in the most courteous and ceremonious language. The letter writer who has the best command of terms of compliment is the most popular, like the lawyer who draws the best contract or makes the best impression before



a jury. Every letter must be sealed and everybody has a seal, whether he is able to write or not. He has his name engraved upon a signet ring or a pendant on his watch, or attached to his purse, because Oriental etiquette requires the impression of a seal upon every paper as evidence of its authenticity. An ordinary Moslem, even a workingman, would not recognize as genuine or pay any attention to a written communication that did not bear a seal. It is even more essential than the signature. Hence there are sealmakers wherever professional letter writers are found.

The River Abana comes into the city with a roar and a dash and is conducted through heavy retaining walls to the public square I have told you about. But when it reaches that place it disappears. Its waters pass into pipes which distribute them to various parts of the city to feed the fountains and the baths. After refreshing the inhabitants the Abana emerges at a hundred different points and flows off through the irrigating ditches to moisten the soil and refresh the fields. It is a curious way to dispose of a river, but very ingenious and equally useful. Not a drop of water is wasted.

The bazaars of Damascus are the pride of the Arab world and the delight of strangers. To American and English tourists they are so attractive that the guides leave them to be visited last, because when a woman once goes there she becomes so fascinated that she is eager to go again and cannot be tempted away to mosques, museums, cemeteries or other places of interest. Nowhere in all the East are Oriental life and Oriental customs displayed so accurately and in such an interesting manner, and the bazaars seem almost

limitless in extent. They are all situated in the same section of the city, and one is entered from another. In fact, they are practically one and consist of several miles of narrow streets, covered over with arched, dome-like roofing, the ancient ones of masonry and the modern ones of corrugated iron, lined on either side by little shops, ten or twelve feet square, filled with assortments of merchandise from all the ends of the earth. The merchants squat cross-legged on the floors of their booths, which are raised a foot or eighteen inches above the roadway, and you can distinguish between the races by their demeanor. The Mohammedan merchant never solicits trade. He preserves a dignified reticence, and, while he is always courteous and willing to show his goods, he does so with a quiet indifference which is often tantalizing and seems to be expressive of a contempt for the infidels who intrude with so much bustle and confusion upon his composure. He strokes his beard, reclines against a cushion and plays with his beads or smokes his narghile while you examine his wares. You will find him quite as sharp at a bargain, but, strange to say, every foreigner who lives in Damascus testifies that he is more honorable in his dealings and more accurate in his statements than either the Jews or the Christians, although his religion teaches him that it is no sin to cheat an unbeliever. The same seems to be true everywhere throughout the Mohammedan world. The testimony is almost unanimous that the representations of a Mohammedan merchant are usually to be relied upon, while those of the Christians and Hebrews are not.

The Jews, Greeks, Armenians and other merchants rush after customers with an eagerness that is very annoying. Americans are supposed to be made of



money, and the occupants of the bazaars cannot be blamed for wanting to get as much of it as possible. Our people spend altogether too freely, and pay exorbitant prices, which the dealers would not think of asking of Germans or Frenchmen or their own people. Hence their anxiety to get an American into their shops, and the enticements they offer are often amusing. Dealers in curios, embroideries, old silver and that sort of thing watch the railway station and the hotels, and know when an American arrives in town. They call upon him at the hotel and stop him in the street, offering their cards, soliciting his patronage and endeavoring to induce him to make an appointment. They will bring goods to the hotel or will come with carriages to conduct a stranger to their shops. When a party of tourists enter the bazaars they are besieged on all sides by dealers clamoring for their attention and entreating them to visit the places they recommend. Many of the merchants can speak English. The number is quite remarkable. Many have lived in the United States, and are familiar enough with that country to discuss different places with intelligence. If they find out that you are from Chicago, they will tell you that they used to live there, or New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, or Boston, as the case may be. They invariably have lived at the place you come from, hoping in that way to excite a benevolent interest. The bazaars are well classified. Dealers in the same sort of goods occupy the same sections, so that trading is more convenient than it would be if they were scattered. The buildings are generally owned by the government or the municipality, and have been erected from time to time to meet the requirements of trade. Rents are low, and the tenants are looked

after by stewards who have an organization that is complete and effective, and subject more or less to the control of the guilds as well as the government. The bazaars are thoroughly cosmopolitan, however, and are crowded with the representatives of every race and nation from Nubia and Abyssinia to Bokhara and Afghanistan. There is a perpetual banquet of color, for the costumes vary as much as the faces. The artistic effect is somewhat impaired at times by finding cheap Paris jewelry, Manchester prints, Waterbury clocks and German merchandise of every variety, and wise people will tell you that a large part of the so-called Oriental wares, the embroideries, brass work, harness, jewelry, old silver, scimeters and other arms which are sold as souvenirs of the country are imported from Europe.

In the goldsmith's bazaar, however, there is no deception, and the jewelers sitting upon their little platforms will manufacture a bracelet or a pair of earrings in gold filigree work, or make any other article that you may desire, and from any design, while you wait. If you will furnish the pattern or even a rude sketch your order will be filled with marvelous rapidity, although the work is roughly done. Everything is sold by weight, with the cost of the labor added. One often picks up rare gems at the goldsmith's bazaar, which to me is the most fascinating of all and more mysterious, for each dealer has a little safe filled with tin cases in which the rarest of precious stones and surprising examples of the art of the ancient goldsmiths are often locked away. The bazaar of the booksellers is still a place of interest, and occasionally one may find a valuable volume or piece of manuscript; but the agents of European museums and rich



collectors have been here so often and have offered such great temptations that the town and the country roundabout has been pretty well searched.

The "Street of the Greeks" is the most attractive place for ladies, because they find there the curios which are so popular for decorative purposes at home, and unless you have more than the ordinary degree of moral courage and unusual powers of resistance you are certain to buy many things that you do not want before you leave the place. Here are all sorts of Oriental articles, most of them of gaudy colors and cheap materials and poor workmanship, and seldom worth half the price that is paid for them—weapons, table covers, embroideries, carpets, rugs, pipes, clothing, armor, tobacco pouches, silks, and everything you can think of. Coins and gems, Oriental coffee cups, pipe-stems made of the wood of the cork tree, wound with gold and silver thread, all kinds of antiquities and fabrics of Oriental manufacture are offered for about four times their value to begin with, according to the Eastern custom, merely as a basis for negotiation. The weapons are generally modern, and most of them are made in Germany; the Oriental coffee cups and tiles come from Austria; the glittering jewelry which the shopkeeper will offer to guarantee as the genuine product of the Bedouins is made in Paris, while the fezzes usually come from Marseilles.

The second-hand shops occupy a section of the bazaar known as Suk el Kumeleh, which literally means "louse market," and if fleas are included in the designation it is very properly applied. Brisk dealing is the practice there, and the dealers have a curious custom of running from one shop to another with an article asking for bids. One speculator will bid 5

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piasters, while the auctioneer rushes on to the next until he has encompassed the entire bazaar. In the meantime he keeps the figures in his mind, and after all the proprietors of the slop-shops have had an opportunity to examine the goods and make an offer he delivers the prize to the highest bidder.

At the Kahn As'ad Pasha, so-called because it was built by a governor of Damascus of that name, is the horse and saddle market. Twice a week, in an open court, horses collected from the desert in a semi-wild state and with a shaggy and uncouth appearance, although they are represented to be of famous Arabian breeds, are offered to the highest bidder. Sometimes 300 or 400 animals will be sold in a morning for nominal prices, the business being conducted very much as at Tattersalls in London. Adjoining the horse market are the shops for the sale of harnesses, saddlebags, saddlery and other equestrian fittings, and many of them are attractive because of their bright colors, gold embroidery and silver and brass mountings. Turkish saddles are characteristic and unique, but are not so handsome as those of Mexico.

The coppersmith's street is a noisy place where hundreds of skillful artisans, including many children, are working constantly upon those brass and copper trays, bowls and dishes which you see offered in the Oriental stores at home. The Dasmascenes have always been famous for fine brass work, and brass dishes are generally used by the natives throughout the country, in place of porcelain, particularly by the Bedouins and the peasantry.

A section of the bazaar is devoted to the sale of pipes and other smoking paraphernalia, at which may be obtained almost anything that was ever invented



for a smoker's use. Among other unique articles cocoanut pipes mounted with gold and silver are very curious.

At the draper's bazaar will be found many women with their faces closely veiled waddling from shop to shop examining goods from curiosity without any intention of buying, and they must be treated with the greatest respect and courtesy to avoid a row, because a veiled woman is under the protection of the public and any person who interferes with her privacy or attempts to penetrate her disguise is sure to be cruelly handled.

The leather shops, the boot and shoe stores and the shops of the furriers are not so well filled at this season as in the winter time, when they become the centers of attraction instead of the silk and linen dealers. At the cloth bazaar may be purchased different Oriental costumes, made up especially to meet the foreign demand. Bedouin outfits are especially popular, and one can buy a full suit, including gun, side arms, saddle and bridle for \$25 to \$30, according to the amount of ornamentation. The wholesale markets are not so interesting for the general public, but the methods of doing business are worth studying, and the strange Oriental scenes that are constantly occurring fascinate the visitor. Numerous courts in the bazaars are devoted to the wholesale trade and the stock is within convenient reach. The dealers usually sleep upon their counters during the busy season so as to be on hand to buy goods immediately upon the arrival of a caravan before their competitors shall get a chance at them. There are seven or eight of these big courts situated in different parts of the bazaars to which caravans of camels are always moving, led by a donkey.

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It must be humiliating for a camel to be compelled to follow a donkey wherever it goes, but I have known a multitude of men and women doing the same thing, and doing it voluntarily.

Everywhere you will see amulets against the evil eye. A chain of blue beads encircles the neck of every horse, donkey or camel, for those animals are peculiarly susceptible to the influence of the evil eye. Men and women wear upon their breasts little locketts of silver which contain printed or written prayers to Mohammed, invoking his protection from that source of danger. All Syrians, and Arabs especially, are very superstitious, but no more so than the Spaniards or the Italians.

You frequently see grown men wandering about the streets and bazaars holding each other's hands like little children. It is a sign of affection. Men kiss each other when they meet, just as Judas kissed the Saviour when he betrayed him. They do not embrace as the Spaniards and Italians do, but kiss each other upon the cheek or lips like women.

The Arab is always careful about tying up his head, but goes with his legs and feet bare in the coldest kind of weather. In that he resembles the Bolivians and other inhabitants of the Andes.

Damascus is famous for its coffee shops, which are the center of life and gossip and the habitual resort of all classes of people. There one can always find interesting and attractive scenes. The Turks seem to enjoy them and take plenty of time to do so. All day long they sit in their calico gowns and turbans playing dominoes, checkers and chess, and sometimes cards. The progressive young Damascenes have adopted the European dress, but their fathers still stick to the



ancient costume, and the coffee-house is almost their only diversion.

A daily newspaper is supposed to be published in Damascus, but it appears only semi-occasionally and has not been issued for three days. The only explanation I can get is that it has been suppressed by the censor. Therefore people are compelled to go to the coffee houses for news and gossip. No strong drinks are served; no wine or beer, but an immense amount of coffee and sherbet and lemonade are consumed. Damascus claims to have been the birthplace of both those refreshing drinks. The juice of the lemon mingled with that of the sugar cane, or the pomegranate, which is equally sweet, and cooled with the snows of Lebanon is said to have been the popular beverage at the time of Abraham. While many of the Damascenes play games at the coffee houses, many solemn old Moslems sit cross-legged, seemingly absorbed in contemplation, smoking their narghile, sipping their coffee or cooling drinks, but never say a word hour after hour. But what they are thinking about nobody knows.

There is a theater on the principal square of Damascus, a dingy, dilapidated, unattractive place, with decrepit benches for the spectators and a kitchen in one corner at which all sorts of ill-smelling food is cooked and served to the patrons as they watch the performance upon the stage. It is a vaudeville programme—juggling, tumbling, fencing and other athletic and acrobatic performances, interspersed with recitations and vocal and instrumental music. The programme begins about nine o'clock in the evening and continues until after midnight, and two or three hundred spectators pay ten cents in our money for the

privilege of entering the rusty old shanty, occupying the broken-down settees and inhaling the poisonous atmosphere for that period. Coffee, sherbet, lemonade and licorice water is peddled to the audience, but no strong drinks, and smoking is continuous until the air is so thick that you can cut it with a knife. The music is excruciating. The singing resembles that of the North American Indians, being a sort of chant and wail combined. When an Arab or a Turk makes a noise that suggests a painful attack of the colic he is singing a love song. When he appears to be crying out in pain for a crushed foot or finger he is chanting a Moslem hymn, and the monotony is simply intolerable. The Orientals know nothing of harmony, but are very emotional and can be wrought up to the highest pitch of ecstasy by a series of sounds that remind you of a lonesome cat upon the back fence. The instrumental music is no better. It is similar to that of the Chinese, entirely without melody or harmony, a continuous thumping upon a single string or a drumhead. The only parts of the theatrical performance that are at all entertaining to a foreigner are the athletic exercises and the recitations. Some of them are quite novel and inspiring.

The Damascus postoffice occupies a small, unpretentious room upon the street which is called Straight, and I am sure that no other city in the world of similar population gets along with so little mail. The 250,000 or 300,000 inhabitants are served with one mail a day, and it is carried in a bag that would be too small for the letters received daily at any village of 500 inhabitants in the United States. It should be said, however, that foreigners do not use the Turkish mails. The Austrian government maintains a separate service for



their accommodation and does a much larger business, because it is safe. When a letter is intrusted to the Turkish postal authorities there is no certainty that it will ever reach its destination, and packages seldom do. Missionaries and other foreigners have had the same experience. Every package that comes through the mails is broken open, and if its contents are of any value, or of any use to the postoffice officials, it is confiscated. If they are not, it is likely to be thrown carelessly to one side and never delivered. Christmas boxes never come intact. They are always tampered with and are no safer when sent by express. Cook's agent at Constantinople would not take our luggage, when we wanted to ship the larger packages through to Cairo, because he said that he could not guarantee its safe arrival. No matter how securely it was locked and sealed it was sure to be tampered with.

The police do not pay much attention to the Turkish postoffice, because they know it would be a waste of time. Conspirators never trust the mails.

When the mail arrives at Damascus, people who are expecting letters gather around the postoffice, and the postmaster comes out and calls off the names of those who have been gratified. The people for whom letters are intended step forward and claim them, but all strangers have to be identified.





V

The Mohammedan at Home





## V

### THE MOHAMMEDAN AT HOME

Damascus, next to Constantinople, is the most important city of Islam, and is said to be the best place to study that religion which is the dominant faith of nearly one-eighth of the human race. There are 248 mosques and colleges for the education of priests in Damascus. Of these, seventy-one are large mosques, in which service is practically continuous, and sermons are preached on Fridays, and 177 are chapels for prayers. Probably one hundred of the latter originally had schools connected with them, but they have long since been closed. Education once flourished in Damascus. The city was a great resort for scholars; its schools of theology, philosophy, jurisprudence and logic were famous, and were attended by students from all parts of the Moslem world. Some of the mosques yet contain fine libraries, relics of the scholastic epoch, but most of the endowments have been dissipated, and there are no scholars in Damascus now, except a few learned priests, while the schools are limited to the theologians. Education is at a very low ebb. Seventy-five or eighty per cent of the people are illiterate. Recently there has been a spasm of reform, and 173 primary schools have been organized upon the French plan for the instruction of children, but so far as can be learned they are poorly attended and poorly taught.

Two of Mohammed's wives and his daughter Fatima are said to be buried in the Makbaret, or public bury-

ing-ground of Damascus, under a very ancient tomb with an imposing dome, and there seems to be no doubt about the truth of the tradition. Mohammed was buried at Medina in 632, and over his grave rises a great green dome. He was born at Mecca in 571. His parents were of an influential and even illustrious family, but died when he was an infant, and left him to the care of an uncle, who trained him to a business career, and at twenty-five years of age he undertook the management of the property of a rich widow, whom he afterward married. During a visit to Syria in her interest he was brought in contact with several learned men of the Greek Church of that day, from whom he first learned of Christ and His gospel.

Mohammed is called the illiterate prophet because he could neither read nor write, but appears somehow to have obtained a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, and when he was about forty years of age began to assert his own prophetic mission, which his fellow townsmen would not recognize, and drove him from Mecca. He fled to Medina, and his flight, known as the Hegira, is considered the most important event of his life, and from it the Mohammedans calculate time as we do from the Christian era. The angel Gabriel, he claimed, revealed to him the contents of the Koran, which were written at his dictation upon palm leaves, stones, pieces of leather and the shoulder blades of camels and goats. After his death these literary fragments were compiled into what is called the Koran, and the entire Moslem world accepts it as inspired and regards it with a degree of reverence accorded to no other book. Its teachings are believed to be absolutely divine and eternal, and upon them Moslems base their religious faith, guide their daily life, and control



their entire intellectual, moral and spiritual action. It is a book of law as well as religion, and is used in the Mohammedan courts as the common law is used in England and the United States. Mohammed accepted most of the Bible, including the Gospels of Jesus, and regarded Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, John the Baptist and others as inspired messengers and apostles. The teachings of Jesus are commended in the Koran, but He is considered simply a teacher of truth and is not acknowledged as the Son of God.

The Mohammedans believe in the essential doctrines of Christianity; that God is the Creator of the Universe, Infinite, Unchangeable and Eternal, and that all events, both good and evil, are foreordained by Him; they believe in the resurrection of the body, in the last judgment, in the immortality of the soul and punishment after death, and their own future life will be governed by their faith and work in this. Mohammedanism is a system of rewards. The Koran does not forbid, but makes promises of reward for good works. Obedience to the Koran and loyalty to the prophet is the duty of true believers. Every Moslem is required to pray at least five times a day, to give alms, to fast and to make pilgrimages. They are forbidden to eat certain meat, and the use of wine and other strong drink is strictly prohibited. The Mohammedans are undoubtedly the most temperate people in the world, and no man can enter the house of prayer without bathing.

Friday is the Moslem Sabbath, because Adam was created on that day and because the resurrection will take place on Friday. Formerly all true believers abstained from their usual vocations on Friday, but few of them do so any longer. The only difference

with them between Friday and any other day is that the services at the mosque are prolonged. There are many saints in the Mohammedan calendar, with shrines which are regarded with great reverence. Pilgrimages are made to them, prayers and sacrifices are offered and various rites and ceremonies observed which are a part of their worship. The pilgrimage to Mecca is obligatory, or at least those who perform it are certain of salvation. It is not so much a journey of hardship and privation as formerly, and can now be made from Damascus in forty-four days upon mules, horses, camels and donkeys. Rich people go by railroad to Beirut and from there by steamer to Jedda, a port on the Red Sea forty miles from Mecca; but as the hardships and privations are less, so the merit of the pilgrimage is diminished in the same degree. For centuries Damascus has been the starting-place for the annual pilgrimage, which begins each spring on a certain date, and is led by the Governor of Syria, who escorts the sacred "Mahmel," or canopy of green silk supported on silver posts and surmounted by a gilded ball and crescent. A new one is sent every year for the protection of the Holy Stone at Mecca, and is the gift of the Pasha of Damascus. The procession, as it passes out of "the Gate of God," is altogether unique, and the spectacle is imposing. All the prominent officials of the city and a military escort accompany the procession for a certain distance, and see the pilgrims well on their way. Upon reaching Mecca they kiss the Holy Stone, hear a sermon from some high priest, pelt Satan with stones in the Valley of Mina, and conclude the ceremony with great sacrificial feasts, at which hundreds of sheep are slaughtered and fed to the multitudes.



Mohammedan worship is regulated by ritual. The worshiper stands with his face toward Mecca, just as pious Israelites turn their faces toward the temple in Jerusalem. The Mohammedans borrowed many customs from the Jews. From remote antiquity the children of Israel in prayer directed their faces toward the place where the ark was located, and when that was firmly established in Jerusalem they turned in their devotions toward the Holy City. It is the custom of the Mohammedans to pray five times a day—at dawn, at noon, midway between noon and sunset, at sunset and an hour and a half later—and those who are especially devout make two other prayers—one soon after midnight and another an hour before day-break—seven in all, which was the custom of the ancient Jews. “Seven times a day do I praise Thee because of Thy righteous judgment,” said David in the 119th Psalm. “Evening, morning and at noon will I pray and call aloud.”

The Mohammedan begins his prayer standing, with his hands outspread and his thumbs touching the lobes of his ears. In this position he repeats certain passages from the Koran, then brings his hands down to his girdle, folds them, and recites several other passages from the same book. Next he bends forward, rests both hands upon his knees, and repeats three times with bowed head the formula of prayer to God, the Most Great. Then he rises and cries, “Allah hu akbar!” (God is great) sixteen times. He then drops forward until his forehead touches the ground between his extended hands. He strikes his head upon the floor at least three times, proclaiming his humility, and often a dozen and sometimes twenty times the act will be repeated, according to his desire to show humility

and repentance. He then returns to his knees and settling back upon his heels repeats a ritual. Next, arising to his feet, he holds his hands and concludes the prayer, repeating over and again the words, "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is his prophet." This may be repeated once or a dozen or forty times, according to the piety of the worshiper, and he holds a string of beads in his hands to keep tally. His obligations are then accomplished, but he can go through the same ritual again as many times as he likes. The more frequently he does so the better Moslem he is. His piety is measured by the number of times he repeats his prayers, and, like the Pharisees of the Scriptures, he prays in public places. No matter where he happens to be or by whom he is surrounded, whether at labor in the fields or selling goods in his shop or however he may be employed, the Mussulman never forgets to pray when the voice of the muezzin reminds him that the hour for devotion has arrived.

It is interesting to see the sailors of the ships on the Mediterranean performing their devotion on the open deck, and I have seen travelers praying on the platform of a railway train, going through the same physical movements that are performed in the mosques. When a court is sitting the judge, the lawyers, witnesses and all concerned will immediately drop business as the call for prayer is uttered and go through their devotions. Merchants will stop in the midst of a bargain, and donkey drivers will drop down by the roadside without regard to publicity, and for the moment they manifest a power of abstraction and concentration which seems quite surprising. Of course the people who pray the most and the longest are the most fanatical, and if there is one thing that will help



them to heaven quicker than prayer it is the killing of a few unbelievers.

Business men open their shops with prayer. As they take down their shutters they appeal to the most high God to send them customers, and when the customers do not purchase as much as they would like to sell they kneel again and pray that Allah will send them more liberal-minded patrons with more money. It would seem that half the men you meet upon the street are muttering prayers as they walk along. They finger their beads with an air of abstraction, their eyes resting upon the ground and their feet moving in slow, dignified strides. The man may be a priest or a merchant or a *cadi* (judge). His demeanor is so austere and sanctimonious that you cannot help thinking that he is guilty of the same hypocrisy for which Christ condemned the Pharisees. You see men sitting before the cafés counting their beads and moving their lips silently, with coffee cups at their sides, and the more dignified the man the more suspicious you are of him.

It was such men as these who planned and directed the massacre of the Christians in Damascus in 1860, one of the most inexcusable and diabolical atrocities that ever occurred. Fourteen thousand unarmed and unoffending citizens are said to have been murdered in Syria, and no fewer than six thousand in Damascus alone, where to this day the Christian quarter still bears evidence of the terrible devastation to which it was subjected. All the consulates except the British and the Prussian were destroyed, and many of the Christian churches. The soldiers from the barracks joined with the mob of Moslems and assisted in the murder and the plunder, while the pasha was entirely passive and did nothing to prevent or to stop the kill-

ing. Many people think that he was acting under orders from Constantinople. The circumstances in many respects were similar to those of the massacre of 1896 at the latter city. The powers of Europe were compelled to interfere because of public indignation, and the Turkish government was induced to punish several of the ringleaders, including Ahmad Pasha, the governor, who was beheaded. Since that time there have been no persecutions or violence.

The mosque of Omayade at Damascus is unsurpassed in all Islam except by those at Constantinople and the mosque of Omar at Jerusalem, and so far as historical associations are concerned, it is perhaps more interesting than any other. It is entered from the great bazaars on several sides, and over the central gateway which leads from the goldsmith's bazaar is a Greek inscription reading as follows:

<p>THY KINGDOM, O CHRIST, IS AN EVERLAST- ING KINGDOM AND THY DOMINION ENDURETH THROUGHOUT ALL GENERATIONS.</p>
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This, as you will recognize, is taken from the One Hundred and Forty-fifth Psalm, with the name of Christ interpolated, and it is surprising that Moham-medan fanaticism should have permitted it to remain for more than twelve hundred years upon the sacred walls of the most sacred temple in the sacred city. But there are stranger things than this. For a time the mosque was divided between the Moslems and Christians, and both worshiped under the same roof,



as the Church of the Holy Sepulcher at Jerusalem is divided between the Greeks and the Roman Catholics.

Long before Abraham passed through Damascus in his migration from Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan, the site of the mosque was occupied by an altar dedicated to the pagan god Baal. It was afterward occupied by "The House of Rimmon," probably erected by one of the Benhadad kings who reigned in this city at the time of David and to whom Naaman referred in his interview with Elisha. Ahaz, the King of Judea, saw it when he came to Damascus, and sent the "pattern" to a priest in Jerusalem. Several centuries later the Greeks built a heathen temple with courts, colonnades and triumphal arches, which, during the reign of Constantine, was converted into a church and dedicated to John the Baptist, whose head is supposed to have been inclosed in a globe at the top of the altar.

In the seventh century, when the Moslems conquered Damascus, they took possession of the eastern part of the church and allowed the Christians to occupy the western part, but this extraordinary toleration did not continue long. The Christians were not only soon expelled, but have ever since been forbidden to enter the inclosure of the sacred edifice, although it is still known as the Mosque of St. John the Baptist, and the head of the apostle is still preserved beneath the "mukam" or shrine that occupies the central part of the building. His remains are scattered over a good part of the world. One of his fingers is in St. Petersburg, several of his bones are in Rome, one of his hands is in Alexandria, his heart is in a mosque at Aleppo, and his head is here.

The mosque of Omayade is one of the largest in the

world, being about 500 feet long and 350 feet broad, and opens into a vast quadrangle with innumerable columns, Saracenic arches and curious structures of the Oriental type. One, called "the Dome of the Water Spout," covers the fountain at which the faithful perform their ablutions before entering the sanctuary. Another, called "the Dome of the Treasure," is a perfect Corinthian structure used for library purposes, and is said to be stored with a large collection of sacred books and records centuries old; but no Christian is allowed to inspect them. The mosque has recently suffered severely from fire, and is now undergoing repairs. Two or three hundred men are at work cutting and laying stone and restoring the roof, which is being covered with fireproofing in the form of thick sheets of lead. Under the lead is a coating of mud, dried hard; under that, several layers of straw matting and then, beneath that and lying upon the rafters, are rows of poplar poles.

We could not visit the mosque without a guard to protect us from the fanatics and half-crazy priests and devotees, who consider it a profanation to allow Christians to enter the sacred building. But instead of a soldier, our protector was the kavass of the American consulate, diminutive and grotesque in appearance, but a man of mighty valor. He resembles Francis Wilson in his make-up for "Erminie." His silver embroidered livery was rather worse for wear, and his hat looked as if it had served a former generation. The sword that dangled at his side was of fearful dimensions, but he is a merciful man and carried a little riding whip, which he used instead, and very freely, upon the calves of small boys, donkey drivers and loafers who got in our way. He is not only useful, but a joy forever, for



his heart is filled with good will and he bubbles over with humor. When we inquired why he must accompany us we were told that he would keep off the beggars, and "if anyone insults you he will report him to the governor and send him to prison." A consular kavass in an Oriental town is all-powerful. He is admitted everywhere. No one dares interfere with him, and the way he ordered the priests around at the mosque was beautiful to behold, while the beggars, whose name is legion, dared not come near us.

The mosque is divided into three aisles by rows of columns which extend the whole of its vast length. The columns are twenty-four feet high, of the choicest marble, with beautifully carved Corinthian capitals. The material of the walls is various colored marbles from the finest quarries of the ancient world, and the upper part of the walls and the dome are enriched with tiles and mosaics. It is said that 1,200 artists were engaged for thirty years in the decoration. The ceiling before the fire was of wood overlaid with gold, but much of it has been destroyed. The part which remains indicates how beautiful it must have been before the catastrophe. In the center of the mosque four massive pillars support a dome 120 feet high and 100 feet in circumference, whose surface is embellished with mosaics and frescoes formed of texts from the Koran in the beautiful caligraphy which the Arabs delight to display. The marble floor is covered with rugs of the rarest texture. The pulpit is of alabaster and the fretwork of its sides represents the highest skill of Oriental artists. The "mukam" or shrine in the center is an exquisite piece of brass and tile work. Both the metal and the porcelain are said to be unsurpassed. It must have been a beautiful building before

the fire, and even now excites the admiration quite as much as St. Sophia or any of the mosques in Constantinople, perhaps because it is a purer example of the real Saracenic art and architecture.

Being a sort of religious center, Damascus is filled with fanatics, devotees, theologians and curious people of all sorts, and here flourish that odd religious brotherhood, who are divided into two classes or sects known as the whirling and the howling dervishes. They are Moslem monks—religious specialists—who are under the restraint of vows to devote their lives to certain pious purposes and to deprive themselves of luxuries, comforts and other forms of worldly happiness, and to praise God perpetually in their peculiar and, what seems to us, outlandish way. They resemble in some respects certain monks of the Roman Catholic Church, like the Trappists, for example, who sentence themselves to eternal silence, and their performances are very little different from those of the "shouting Methodists" whom we have at home. In fact they remind me of revival and camp-meeting scenes I have witnessed in the United States, where the emotions of the worshipers have been excited to a condition of ecstasy by means similar to those used to the same end by the dervishes of the Moslem faith.

It would be scarcely considered consistent with spiritual sincerity for a company of converts in the United States to enter into contract to give exhibitions of their religious fervor for the amusement of the public, or for the managers of a "protracted meeting" to charge strangers an admission fee in order that they might gratify their curiosity as to how the "redeemed" may behave under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Those things, however, are actually done by the



dervishes. They charge an admission fee in many places to unbelievers who wish to see them whirl and hear them "howl." This is explained and justified on the ground that the "infidels" contribute nothing to the support of the church, and that it is quite as proper to take money at the door as to pass a contribution plate as we do in our churches. No Turk, no Mohammedan, no man who wears a fez, has to pay for admission, only foreigners who are actuated by curiosity. It is the common and the proper thing for all strangers visiting Mohammedan cities to witness the religious exercises of the dervishes and preparations are made to receive them. Chairs are placed for their accommodation, for the rest of the congregation sit Turkish fashion, cross-legged upon the floor; and felt slippers are provided for the "infidels" to draw over their boots instead of requiring them to walk about in their stocking feet. The best places are reserved for them, and it seems to be expected that they will come and stare and ask questions about the extraordinary scenes that are to be witnessed.

The order of dervish monks dates back a thousand years. It originated with a famous mystic who was given to long fasts and vigils, and who used to see visions and perform miracles. Some of the leading dervishes at this day are supposed to have similar powers, and when they pass into a state of ecstasy or hysteria, their eyes are allowed to see what transpires in the Moslem heaven and their ears to hear the whispers of the prophets, the patriarchs and other holy spirits who have gone before. The dervishes are also mendicants, and live upon such contributions as pious people offer them. They abandon all earthly joys and possessions and by a complete surrender of "self,"

merge their souls into God and live under a spell which renders them capable of elevating themselves into ecstasy and becoming oblivious to all external impressions.

There are two kinds of dervishes, which differ as to the best methods of praising God. The dancing, or Mevlevi dervishes, are named after their founder, Mevlana, who was a prince of Persia, and in 1245 renounced the world, became a hermit and wrote a book called "The Mesnevi." His successor is the chief of the order, occupies a high place in the Moslem Church, ranks with the archbishop of Canterbury in England, crowns the sultan of Turkey, although the ceremony consists of girding him with the sword of Osman instead of placing a coronet upon his brow. The Mevlevi dervishes are bound by very strict vows, and their lives are spent in perpetual adoration. They go through their peculiar religious exercises of dancing or whirling, which they call "zikr," twice a week, every Tuesday and Friday, after the midday prayer. Their physical strength will not permit them to do so more frequently.

The ceremony consists in revolving gently upon their toes and at the same time moving slowly around the mosque, which is usually built in octagonal form, circle within circle, to the music of flute and tambourine and a monotonous chant, in which the power and glory of God are extolled and the uselessness of an earthly existence is proclaimed. The chanting and orchestral accompaniment are performed by monks who are physically unable to go through the exercise. It is a tremendous strain upon the body as well as upon the senses, and the dervish monks are always short-lived. When the dancing commences, they



extend their arms at full length, the right above the head, the left below, with one hand opened upward, the other opened downward, their eyes closed and their heads bent sidewise upon their shoulders. Sometimes they continue to revolve without ceasing for half an hour. The chief priest or monk gives the signal to begin and to stop, according to some rule which I have not been able to ascertain. After a few moments of whirling the muscles become rigid, the performer loses control of his senses and becomes partially unconscious, passing into an epileptic condition, which is the object desired, for the soul then enters the spiritual world, "becomes one with God," and the effacement of the corrupt and carnal nature of the subject is complete in the presence of the Creator.

At the close of the exercise the monks pass out of the mosque in a semi-conscious condition and enter their cells, where they remain in seclusion until they have recovered full consciousness and the ecstasy has passed away. Preparations for the exercise are made by fasting and prayer. The bodies of the devotees are very poorly nourished. They are vegetarians and take no stimulants. Bread and vegetables are their only food, no wine, coffee nor tea, nor other artificial stimulant is permitted, and they take no medicine when they are ill, depending entirely upon prayer, like the Christian Scientists. Naturally they are lean, pale, haggard looking men with distorted ideas of all worldly affairs. They seldom appear outside of their convents except to beg or to attend funerals, at which they are commonly employed as mourners.

The Rufal, or howling dervishes, another sect, were founded in 1160 by Ahmed Rufal, an eminent and learned monk who invented a new form of worship,

which is similar in its effects to that of the dancing dervishes. The worshipers are thrown into a state of ecstasy and spiritual purity by the exercise of the vocal chords as well as of the muscles of the body. Their physical movements are even more violent than those of the dancers, and their worship is much more exciting for strangers. It is not unusual for them to be carried out of the mosque quite helpless and entirely unconscious, struggling in spasms and foaming at the mouth. Many times have I attended camp meetings and revivals among the negroes of the southern states, at which new converts were thrown into similar convulsions. Unbelievers are admitted to the worship of the howling dervishes upon the payment of a fee. Believers are admitted free. The mosque is usually a chamber thirty or forty feet square, the floor being covered with Turkish rugs and the "mihrab" or seat of the sheik, or leader, being placed in the direction of Mecca. After the recitation of the usual midday prayers the sheik takes a position cross-legged upon the carpet in front of the "mihrab," while the monks seat themselves in a semicircle before him and recite in unison a monotonous formula which corresponds to the Christian confession of faith.

This preliminary being finished, they arise and commence slowly to repeat in unison the words, "La ilah illa 'llah," which they divide into six syllables. It means that God is great and that there is no god but Allah. While pronouncing the first syllable they bend forward; at the second syllable they raise themselves to an upright natural position, and at the third syllable they bend backward. These three motions are repeated as the three following syllables are pronounced, alternately inclining the body to the right



and to the left. The words are pronounced softly in unison, and the motion begins very slowly, but the tones increase in strength and the motions in rapidity until the sound becomes unintelligible, a continuous wail or wild cry, and the motion of the most violent character. There is always an accompaniment of drums and other instruments.

After this performance has continued for a certain length of time the sheik gives a signal and the monks begin to yell and scream and roar, each on his own hook, and twist their bodies into all sorts of contortions until they lose control of their muscles and their senses, and throw themselves into a frenzy of excitement, stamping their feet upon the floor, grasping each other's hands and whirling about while the sheik encourages them by voice and gesture. This continues until the dervishes are exhausted. Some fall down, foaming at the mouth, others are as rigid as the victims of epileptic fits. They shout "Hu, ya Hu!" which is equivalent to "God, oh God!" and each monk is supposed to reiterate it ninety-nine times ninety-nine times, using the ninety-nine different names and attributes of God each ninety-nine times, but of course in the intensity of their excitement it is impossible for them to keep an accurate record of these prayers, and after a few minutes the "worship" becomes a scene of inextricable confusion. The physical and mental condition of the dervishes is almost precisely that, called the "powers," of colored Methodist converts at revivals and camp-meetings in the United States.

Dervishes are in great demand at funerals. The custom of hiring mourners is a very ancient one, and the Moslems are simply imitating the practice of the Jews, who, from the time of the prophets, employed

professionals to make demonstrations of grief and lamentation. In all Jewish cities and communities professional mourners are called upon to make public lamentations of a more or less extravagant manner for the dead. Their manifestations of grief are often boisterous. They tear their hair, beat their breasts, rend their garments, cast dust upon their heads and shed profuse tears, introducing the names of the dead and their relatives into their cries and moans. In ancient times it was customary to preserve the tears shed on these occasions, each professional and actual mourner being provided with a bottle called a "lachrymatory," made of thin glass or pottery, with a long, slender neck and a funnel-shaped mouth, in which to catch the tears. It was customary to cork and seal these tear-bottles carefully and place them in the coffins of the dead as a complimentary testimonial, the amount of tears shed being a measure of the grief. You will find several allusions to this custom in the Bible, and if you have the opportunity of attending a funeral in Damascus, or any other of the ancient towns of Syria which have not been affected by modern innovations, you will witness demonstrations similar to those of David over the body of Absalom and Jeremiah "over the daughter of my people."

Tear-bottles can be purchased at any of the curiosity-shops, both genuine ones which have been rifled from the graves of ancient cemeteries, and imitations which are manufactured at Damascus, Antioch, Jerusalem and other places.

Among the Moslems, dervishes are often employed as mourners, and they know their business. They precede and follow the bier upon the last journey of the dead to the cemetery, howling like a gang of lunatics.



They stand around the grave while the coffin is being lowered and covered with earth and put up such a performance as cannot be seen elsewhere, and which no sane person would care to witness but once. I have no doubt they take due pride in their ability in this direction, as other people do in other specialties, and they are well paid for making the disturbance by the relatives of the dead. Altogether, the dervishes, next to the lepers and beggars, are the most repulsive class of people that you meet in the East.





VI

The Women of Damascus





## VI

### THE WOMEN OF DAMASCUS.

The women of Damascus—that is, the Moslem women—are more closely veiled than those of Constantinople and other eastern cities, because the people there are more tenacious in the observance of the ancient customs of their race and the requirements of their religion. The veils are thicker also, and cover the entire face. Some of them are figured so that the concealment is even more complete. Greeks, Jews and Armenians do not wear veils, and some of them are very handsome, particularly the Jewish women. Their eyes, complexion and hair are superb. The types of Oriental loveliness remind you of Solomon's Song. A great many women go about the streets wrapped in white sheets. This was formerly a badge of the Jews, but is now universal among the poor people. No women are employed about the hotels or restaurants. All the "domestic" work is done by men. In the shops and manufactories of Damascus thousands of women and girls are employed, but they are exclusively Greeks and Jews. No Moslem would permit his wife, daughter or sister to appear in a shop or any other place where men are employed. You frequently find women doing the hardest kind of manual labor, as in Bohemia and Hungary. They carry the hod, they dig ditches, they haul carts and are employed in the most menial labor. In Damascus factories, where brass work, pottery, inlaid furniture, embroideries, and other characteristic merchandise of the country, is produced, women artists work side by

side with men, producing similar results, but receiving only half as much wages. Such is the rule the world over. No matter whether a woman works in Chicago or Damascus, in Fall River or Constantinople, in Sweden or in Spain, in Japan or Bolivia, she is never paid more than half as much as men receive for the same kind of labor and the same degree of skill. The injustice is universal.

The children employed in the Damascus factories, hammering brass, carving wood, making the inlaid furniture and other things intended for export, show a remarkable degree of skill. You see little boys and girls seven or eight years old, who ought to be in the kindergartens or the primary departments, with engraving tools in their hands instead of primers, and showing a skill and accuracy that is marvelous. Little girls sit at monstrous looms making rugs and weaving silk of the richest texture without patterns and with a speed and skill that is almost miraculous. And the wages they receive are only a small percentage of what a bootblack or a newsboy would pick up on the streets of Chicago any day; sums insufficient to provide them proper food and clothing; only a few coppers valued perhaps at six, eight or ten cents in our money.

Girls are usually married in their twelfth or thirteenth year, sometimes when they are only ten years old. The Damascene in search for a bride employs the services of an intermediary, either a relative or a professional, who does the business for him either for love or for a fee, which is regulated by the amount of the dowry. There are women, generally midwives and nurses, who make a business of arranging marriages. In high Moslem society a groom never sees his bride until the wedding day. Among the lower classes,



however, intercourse is common. Among the Jews and Greeks and other members of Christian sects, families intermingle with more or less freedom, but marriages are arranged in the same way. The custom seems to be civil rather than religious.

Women are still bought and sold. If a girl is very attractive her beauty gives her a value as a bride that is not possessed by a widow, or a spinster of advanced years, or a maiden without personal charms. Therefore a father who has a handsome daughter expects to be paid a high price for her, as if she were a slave, while if he is so unfortunate as to have an ugly one he is expected to provide a sufficient dowry to induce some enterprising or avaricious person to take her off his hands. When everything is arranged the affianced groom pays the purchase money to a trustee. In case of a dowry the rule is the same. The money, whichever way it happens, is always settled upon the wife. If she has been purchased it becomes a trust fund which she inherits upon the death of her father or when she reaches a certain age. If it is a dowry it passes into the control of her husband, who may enjoy the interest it may pay or any revenue that may be derived from the investment, like any other part of the family income; but in case of his death or divorce the principal belongs to the wife.

The contract being completed and signed, the wedding takes place with more or less ceremony, according to the wealth and social position of the contracting parties. Before the ceremony, usually, the bride is bathed by the bridesmaids and other attendants and her body is anointed with ointments and perfumes. She is then enveloped in wraps until her figure and face are entirely concealed, and conducted by a pro-

cession of friends and relatives to the home of her future husband, who, with his father, mother and relatives, receive her at the threshold. The ceremony of marriage is then performed, the wedding feast is eaten, and at its close the blushing bride is put to bed by her attendants.

The sale of women slaves is almost obsolete in Turkey. Occasionally in Constantinople, Damascus or in some of the larger cities, a beautiful girl from the interior is offered for a high price to the pashas and other rich connoisseurs in female beauty. In the interior of the country the custom of filling the harems by purchases of attractive women still exists, but is growing rarer as the influence of modern civilization extends eastward and penetrates Turkish communities. The farther one goes from the railways and printing offices the more common are the ancient practices. In Damascus, I am told by old residents, there are several professional procurers, both women and men, who make it their business to travel throughout the interior picking up pretty women and buying them of their parents on speculation. Similar people carry on a similar business in Constantinople, Smyrna and other large cities. They are known throughout the country, and when they arrive in a town or a village their presence becomes advertised, and they are waited upon at the khan (or inn) by fathers who have daughters for sale or local speculators who know where choice human merchandise may be obtained. The procurer, having obtained a collection, for which he has paid larger or lesser sums, according to their personal attractions, returns to Damascus with his camel caravan and places the girls in his own house, where they are attended by dressmakers, milliners, hairdressers



and other grooms, who enhance their beauty by artificial methods and dress them according to the prevailing fashion.

Men who desire to make purchases of that kind always know, or can easily ascertain where to apply, and when the procurer satisfies himself that they mean business and are able to pay his prices the negotiations begin. When they have reached a certain point the customer is admitted to the house where the girls are kept and allowed to inspect their charms. When he makes a selection the price is agreed upon and the money is paid, usually from \$500 up to \$3,000, and I am informed that in 1901 a girl of marvelous beauty was sold in Damascus for \$5,000. She was a Circassian. Most of the girls are Circassians. It is the custom in that country for fathers to sell their daughters, and the Circassian women are considered the most beautiful in all the Ottoman Empire.

Men engaged in this business have a certain degree of conscientiousness. They will not deal with Christians and always exact a pledge from the customer that the victim and her children, if she ever has any, shall be brought up in "the true faith." Some people say this is a matter of policy rather than conscience, because if the officials should learn that a procurer was selling Moslem girls to Christians he would not be allowed to continue in the business and would be punished severely. The Moslem moulahs, or priests, would look after that.

In the winter of 1901 an Italian nobleman from Naples appeared in Constantinople in search of a Circassian girl. By some means or another he had obtained one fifteen years previous, having purchased her of a dealer in Asia Minor. He took her to Naples,

where she lived as his mistress and had proved faithful, amiable and affectionate, but her health had failed and he wanted to get another of the same sort, but was unable to do so. Everywhere that he applied he was informed that the custom of buying and selling human flesh had been abolished.

Women are not allowed in some of the mosques. In others during certain hours and days they can worship God. Friday, the Sabbath of the Moslems, when all true believers of the masculine gender make a point of going to church, their wives, sisters and daughters resort to the cemeteries and wail for the dead. But all their time is not spent in weeping, and sorrow is not the only emotion they display on these occasions. They take with them bunches and garlands of flowers and decorate the graves of their relatives and pray and weep over the dead for a time. Then, when this pious duty is performed, they gather in little groups and have a good time gossiping about the living. Thus the day of mourning is very popular among the Moslem women. It gives them almost the only opportunity they have of cultivating the acquaintance of their neighbors, because it is not customary to exchange visits as in our country.

There are few large harems in Damascus, but polygamy is general among those who can afford the luxury. In fact, a man's social position among his fellow men is regulated somewhat by the number of his wives, just as it is in our country by the horses he keeps, or his membership in clubs. A Damascene business man who has four or five wives is considered about as much of a swell as a Chicagoan who sports an automobile. Divorce is easy, however. All a man has to do is to say to his wife: "Cover thy face and



return to thy father's house. I am done with thee." That is the end of it, except the business transactions that must follow; for, as I have explained, she is allowed to keep her dowry and the price that her husband paid for her.

I noticed that the Damascus women who carry water upon their heads like the maidens you see in the pictures of the illustrated Bible, do not use beautifully shaped jars and urns like the ancients, but old petroleum tins, some of them bearing the stamp of the Standard Oil Company and others those of Russian manufacturers at Batoum.

The dogs of Damascus are not as numerous as those of Constantinople, but are quite as lazy, mangy and wretched. They are regarded as sacred and are allowed to live and die without interference. Nobody owns them, nobody cares for them in particular, but collectively they are the wards of the city and live on the scraps that are thrown into the street. They bark all night and sleep all day, stretched in the sunshine, occupying the roadway or the sidewalk, or the most comfortable spot they can find. Hackmen and teamsters drive around them and pedestrians step over them, being careful not to wake them up.

Anyone who goes into a Damascus market, and the same applies to all the cities of Syria, will be reminded of the words of the Saviour: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? Fear not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." These pestilential little birds are even more numerous and troublesome in Syria than in the United States, and always have been since the time of David, who complained that they appropriated the altars of God for their nests; but they

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afford a cheap and unfailing supply of food for the poor, and you see large baskets filled with them in the market places, where they are sold for about the same price that they brought in the Saviour's time. They are generally served every day at the hotel for dinner.

Pigeons are almost as numerous, but are never killed. They are sacred in all Mohammedan countries. Some people say that the Mohammedans are afraid of exterminating the Holy Spirit, which inhabits a dove; others that they remember the dove which brought the olive branch back to the ark.



VII

By Railroad to the Grave of Noah





## VII

### BY RAILROAD TO THE GRAVE OF NOAH

Tourists will soon be able to reach the ruins of Baalbek by a railroad now being constructed from El Mualla-ka, about halfway between Beirut and Damascus, up the valley between the two ranges of the Lebanon Mountains, to Hama, a busy city of 50,000 or 60,000 inhabitants. The work is being done by a French company, which owns the Beirut-Damascus line, and under the same concession. The grading is all finished. Large quantities of iron ties, rails and other materials have been scattered along the right of way and gangs of workmen are rapidly laying them in place. It is expected that the road will be completed in 1903 and an important and productive section of Syria made accessible to commerce.

Hama, or Hamath, as it is spelled in the Bible, was the capital of a kingdom, the extent of which we do not know. Amos speaks of it as "Hamath the great," and in the Second Kings we are told of its capture by the Assyrians. During the Greek occupation of Syria it was a very important market, and remained so through ten centuries down to the time of the crusades, when it was fought over time and again by Tancred and Saladin. Its modern importance is somewhat limited compared with ancient times, but it is still one of the largest markets in Syria and the chief trading place for the Bedouins of a considerable area. The situation is hot and unhealthy, the town is dirty and badly paved; most of the houses are built of mud and are exceedingly dirty, but have agreeable gardens,

which partially redeem them. The chief curiosity of the place is the enormous wheels used for pumping up the water of the Orontes. They look like miniature Ferris wheels, and, turning upon wooden axles without journals, the creaking is continuous and fearful. For that reason no stranger is ever able to sleep in Hama for several nights after his arrival.

At present the commerce between Hama and the coast is carried on by camel caravans to the railway at El Mu-alla-ka, and the latter is quite an important town. It has several schools maintained by the Protestants and the Jesuits. We drove from there to Baalbek in a carriage through one of the most beautiful and fertile valleys I have ever seen. The ground was glowing with poppies, buttercups, anemones and other wild flowers. Antoine, our driver, was a Protestant convert from the Orthodox Greek Church, and could talk English well. He learned it at the Presbyterian mission school. The road was good, the carriage comfortable, the weather delightful, and the route for four hours was a panorama of continuous interest until we reached ancient Baalbek and were received at a hotel that was opened only the week before and was as neat and comfortable as the most fastidious traveler could wish for.

In the village of Kerak-nuh, on the outskirts of El Mu-alla-ka, is the tomb of Noah, and the most extraordinary object I have seen in Syria. Directly across the valley on the lower range of the Anti-Lebanon Mountains is the tomb of Seth, the third son of Adam and Eve, which is in better condition and regarded with greater reverence than that of Noah, but Seth was only fifty-five feet tall, according to the Moslem tradition, while Noah was 152 feet. Noah was so tall that when



they came to lay him in his sepulcher they were obliged to sink a shaft twenty-two feet deep and turn his legs from the knees downward, because the top of the hill where they wanted to bury him would permit a grave only 132 feet long. And there it is. The mukam, as they call it, looks like the coping around a park, being a narrow, straight line of masonry about four feet wide and three feet high and prism-shaped at the top. It is covered with green cotton cloth (the sacred color of the Mohammedans) and ornamented with embroidered blankets or covers. The day we were there several candles were burning at the head and a dozen or more towels, turbans, shawls and pieces of white cloth were laid across the tomb, in order to absorb its sanctity. These articles, after having lain upon the grave for a certain time, become sacred and are carried to mosques in the villages throughout the country, where they are placed with great reverence upon the altars as relics of the patriarch Noah. Pilgrims come and kiss them and they have been known to work miracles.

Near the head of the tomb were several wreaths of faded flowers which faithful devotees had placed there to secure the assistance of Noah in carrying out vows that they had made. As an old woman opened the door for us to enter the long, stone building which covers the mukam, we were followed in by a lot of naked babies with fat legs and black eyes, who knelt reverently, kissed the masonry and then held out their hands to us, begging piteously for baksheesh.

Think of kissing the tomb of Noah!

One big lamp with a large reflector hangs in the center of the room and gives light enough for evening services, which are often held there for the benefit of

Mohammedan pilgrims and persons of eminence who come long distances to worship, as several tablets suspended upon the walls testify by their inscriptions. Jew and Persian, Greek and Roman, and the various sects of Moslems venerate this shrine, which has been here longer than history can relate. Its origin and the traditions attached to it can be traced back to a few centuries after Christ. The tradition is that after the flood Noah came to live at Kerak-nuh and died in this little village, 152 feet tall and 950 years old. Besides this shrine there are other traces of remote antiquity in the mountains near by. Numerous rock-cut tombs of various shapes and sizes are found near every village and in lonely gorges where human habitations have never existed. The men who made them and occupied them are not known and cannot be traced. It is certain, however, that they were there at the time of the Roman invasion.

The grave of Noah is particularly holy to the Druses, a peculiar sect of Moslems, which for centuries has been contesting with the Maronites for supremacy in the mountains of Lebanon. They are said to be the most intelligent and progressive of all the tribes, but their aggressive and independent disposition has kept them almost constantly in wars, preventing a normal increase in population and prosperity. They are hospitable and generous, and particularly friendly toward Protestants and Americans. Many of their children have been educated in the American schools, and several of the most influential Druse leaders are graduates of the American college at Beirut. They encourage medical and educational missionary work in their villages, appreciating its value and advantages, but few of them are ever converted to Christianity. Some



people contend that they are infidels, and that they worship idols, but that is not true. They worship in secluded places and perform mysterious rites and never discuss their religious views with outsiders or try to make converts. They seem to be satisfied with their present numerical strength.

Until the recent war between the Druses and Maronites, their doctrines and practices were well-kept secrets; but during that struggle their khulwats, or temples, were plundered, their books and paraphernalia of worship seized and sold to curious individuals. Most of it went to museums and libraries in Europe, so that there is no longer any mystery about their religion. They obtained their name and their doctrines from a Persian mystic called Durazy, who lived in the eleventh century and organized a body of fanatical followers into a compact, resolute, secret society, which has survived wars, massacres, persecutions and political revolutions for a thousand years. They are not more than 100,000 souls, and their influence is due to their intelligence, enterprise, their indomitable courage and admirable organization. They will not accept office or employment of any sort from the government; they do not use tobacco, wine, coffee, tea or other artificial beverages. They drink nothing but milk and water and eat only the fruit of their own farms and the flesh of their own flocks. They make their own clothing, their own tools and are almost entirely self-dependent and self-satisfied. They have rather loose marriage relations, their men being able to put away their wives for any whim and take others as their fancy pleases, so that the families are very much confused. A woman may be the wife of one man this month and the wife of another six

months later, and she may have the care of the children of several of her women neighbors, as the offspring stay with the father when the parents separate.

The Druses are farmers and cattle breeders. They seldom engage in commercial pursuits or mechanical industries, and they will not pay nor accept interest on borrowed money, because they consider it contrary to the teachings of the Bible and the Koran, both of which they accept. They also accept both Jesus and Mohammed as messengers of God and ministers of truth, and consider them one and the same person—the embodiment of the Holy Spirit. They believe in the transmigration of souls and that there are only so many souls in all the world, which pass from one body to another. They are particularly remorseless in the observance of the *lex talionis*, which is in force among all the tribes of the Lebanon Mountains and the Arabs of the surrounding desert. The right of blood revenge has been recognized in Syria ever since the Mosaic era, and the vendetta is practiced as rigidly as in Corsica or Sicily. The Druses never appeal to the law or ask the assistance of the police. They themselves punish people who offend them on the old Mosaic principle of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a life for a life.

Another strange and bloodthirsty sect, numbering about 200,000, are the Nusaireeyeh, who live in the northern part of the Lebanon range and also try to keep their religious doctrines secret. They are still supposed to worship idols. Women are denied souls and are not permitted to take part in or even witness their worship. Polygamy is practiced and, as among the Druses, a man can change his wife whenever he likes. In their dealings with others both the Druses



and the Nusaireeyeh are said to be fair and honorable.

The Arabic Christians belonging to the Orthodox Greek Church in Syria number about 150,000. They are under the patronage and protection of Russia and have a patriarch at Athens. The Catholic Greeks, so-called, are persons of Greek origin and ancestry who have adopted the Roman Catholic faith. The United Greeks are still another sect. They have a creed of their own very similar to the Armenian. The Jacobites are a body of dissenters from the Greek Church, who have adopted the name and doctrines of Jacobus, a monk of the Greek Church who became bishop of Edessa and died in the sixth century. There are half a dozen other religious sects of greater or less strength. Palestine seems to be prolific of theological schisms. The Christians are divided into fourteen different sects, while the Mohammedans are divided into only three.

Nobody knows the population of Syria. There never has been a census, but it is no larger than it was half a century ago, and probably less. The death rate keeps along about even with the birth rate, and the number of emigrants that have come into this country to establish colonies has been exceeded by the emigrants who have gone to North and South America, to Egypt and South Africa, and the ports of the Mediterranean. The area of Syria is about equal to that of Pennsylvania. The population is variously estimated at 1,000,000 to 2,000,000, including that uncertain and ever changing element, the Bedouins, who may be in Damascus to-day and in Egypt a month hence. Damascus is the largest city, having about 250,000 people; Beirut, 120,000; Aleppo, 100,000; Hums, 60,000; Hama, 55,000; Jerusalem, 50,000; Tripoli,

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35,000; Jaffa, 10,000; Haifa, 10,000; Sidon, 10,000. According to the best authorities there are only 60,000 Jews in Palestine and 10,000 Protestants.

There are no trolley cars in Turkey or in any part of Palestine, and the sultan will grant no concessions for the use of electric power in any form or for any purpose. He is unalterably opposed to electric cars, electric lights and telephones. He has granted no concessions for railways to Mecca, and will grant none. He is slowly building a railway of his own in that direction. It connects with the Beirut Railway at Damascus and follows the watershed on the east side of the Lebanon Mountains through the desert east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea for a distance of about 1,500 miles, via Medina, the burial place of Mohammed, to Mecca, the Holy City.

The track has been extended from Damascus as far as opposite the Dead Sea, at a cost of \$2,000,000, and trains are now running about 150 miles. The right of way has been graded about 100 miles further by soldiers under the direction of a German engineer, and iron ties and rails have been scattered along the track; but thus far no bridges have been built and little progress has been made for several years because of the lack of funds. A German company has offered to take over the enterprise and complete the road to Mecca, but the sultan is unwilling to intrust it to foreign hands, for religious reasons as well as for national jealousy. There are no towns of any importance on the route selected, and there will be no local business. The only traffic will be the transportation of pilgrims, who now vary between 300,000 and 400,000 a year. It is believed that the railway would encourage pilgrimages and raise the total above 500,000. But, estimating the



receipts on that basis, they would not exceed \$2,500,000 a year, and would not pay the interest on the cost of construction, to say nothing of maintenance and operating expenses; so the enterprise is not a tempting investment, and the only merit in it as a business proposition is the possibility of a subsidy from the Turkish government, which, as you know, is usually willing to borrow money, but never willing to pay it. It is a narrow gauge, with French rolling stock, the grades are not bad and construction work will not be more expensive than the average on our prairies, but all material will have to be imported from Europe; nothing but iron ties can be used, and all fuel and other supplies of operation will be exceedingly expensive. The most difficult obstacle to overcome is the lack of water. There are very few streams on the route, and nearly every one of them is dry more than half the year. The springs are few and only capable of sustaining the present traffic by caravans of camels.

Dr. Schumaker, an American engineer, thinks it is possible to obtain water by sinking artesian wells, which has never been attempted. He believes there is an artesian basin under that part of the desert. Numerous ice-cold springs are to be found in the mountain gorges. The rainfall is considerable, but is confined to a few months in the year, and the water disappears as soon as it strikes the earth, rushing into rocky gorges or percolating through the thirsty sands. It must go somewhere, and there is no apparent drainage. Dr. Schumaker, therefore, thinks there must be a subterranean basin or reservoir to receive it, of which the springs are evidence, and that wells and steam pumps might redeem a large part of the country as well as make a railroad possible. But the policy of the sul-

tan's government is to tear down and not to build up. Public enterprises are not encouraged in Turkey, but are resisted in every direction, and, although, as I have suggested, there is a religious motive back of the Mecca Railway which appeals strongly to the fanatical mind of the sultan, there is no hope for an immediate consummation of the project, for other reasons as well as those named.

The Arabs in the country west of the Jordan, and particularly those farther south, in Arabia, have conceived the idea that this road is not alone for the purpose of carrying pilgrims to Mecca. They fear that it is intended as a piece of military strategy in order that the sultan may send troops into their country in case any disagreement should arise. They fear also that it will deprive them of a large income they now receive for protecting the caravans of pilgrims that pass over the desert.

Several of the Arabian sheiks have powerful tribes behind them, and for generations have been suspected of disloyalty to the Turkish government. The sultan has cleverly avoided a collision with them, but has never been successful in bringing them to his support. They are practically independent and levy blackmail upon all commerce and travelers. Even the poorest pilgrim is required to pay them a fee for their theoretical protection against robbers, although it is notorious that the only robbers belong to the same bands. Some years ago the sultan offered them a subsidy amounting to a few thousand dollars a year each if they would allow pilgrims to pass on to Mecca without interference, and the agreement has been generally observed so far as the poorer classes of pilgrims are concerned, but the rich are still required to pay. The sheiks



understand very well that when the railway is completed they can no longer levy blackmail. The sultan sent a commission down to confer with them, and the result of the conference was not satisfactory. It was disclosed that hostility to him extended throughout all Arabia, and that the only tie between him and his subjects in that part of the empire is due to his position as the head of the Moslem church.

And even in that respect their loyalty is gradually weakening. As the light breaks in upon the minds of the Arabs they begin to recognize the weakness and defects of the Turkish government and compare their condition with that of the people of other countries living under different forms of government. The development of Egypt has been an object lesson by which they have been greatly impressed, and although they know very little of the world beyond the sands of their desert the seeds of dissatisfaction have been sown and the spirit of hostility is gradually invading the entire Arab race.

Two years ago a movement was inaugurated in Arabia to deprive the sultan of the Caliphate, that is, the headship of the church of Islam, on the ground that he is an alien, a Tartar, and does not even belong to the race of Mohammed, the founder of the church. This propaganda has been going on quietly by the publication of pamphlets containing the history of the church and the Turkish Empire, and showing that Abdul Hamid is a foreigner and not an Arab; that his ancestor, Othman, the founder of the present dynasty, seized the Caliphate by force, overthrew the Arab authority, was an invader of their land, and that his successors did not accept the religion of Mohammed for several centuries after they came into power. This

movement originated in Egypt, and is supposed to be assisted by contributions of money from Englishmen. The Moslems of India are also promoting it, and its agents are working among the pilgrims who come to Mecca. The sultan is powerless to do anything, and if the rebels should find a competent leader it would become as dangerous as the insurrections of the Christians in the Balkan provinces. The Sherif of Mecca is the head of the Islam church in Arabia. He is nominated by the sultan, and reports directly to him, hence he is supposed to be loyal, but he is not a strong man, and his influence will not be of importance to either side.

There are sentimental objections to all innovations in Palestine. People consider this holy ground, and archeologists, artists, Biblical students and others interested in its antiquities and historical features are accustomed to deplore the construction of railways and the introduction of modern conveniences. They would prefer to preserve all the ancient conditions and features and to restore the land as far as possible to the condition it was at the time of Moses, or at least at the beginning of the Christian era. If such a plan could be consummated; if Palestine could be preserved and protected as a great religious and Biblical museum, as a permanent monument and remembrance of the Saviour, the prophets and the patriarchs, it would be a blessed undertaking, but such a thing is not possible under the domination of the Turks. Their mission is to destroy and not to preserve. Their determination is to extort every penny that can be wrung from an oppressed and wretched people, and whatever is sacred to the Christian world is offensive to them.



If the powers of Europe should take possession of Palestine and place it under the protection of England, Germany, Austria, or any other civilized nation, it would be the crowning glory of the twentieth century. Great Britain is to blame for present conditions from the Danube to the Nile. We know what has been done for the reform of the administration and the restoration of prosperity in Bosnia, Bulgaria and in Egypt, and the people of Palestine might be enjoying the same blessings at this moment but for the selfishness of the British government. Lord Salisbury was afraid that if the Turk went out the Russian would come in, and therefore supported and protected the Turk with all his cruelty and crime, rather than permit the possibility of Russian advancement. Germany, too, is a Christian nation, and yet she allows Bethlehem, Calvary, the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane to remain under the control of the Moslems, and the other holy places sanctified by the footsteps of the Saviour to be the scene of continual outrage and extortion.

However, Germany is working slowly but surely to the bottom of affairs in this part of the world, and every man who is interested in the peace and the protection of the Holy Land should rejoice that such is the case. Ninety-nine per cent of the world care nothing for the political problem involved. They are indifferent whether John Bull or the czar or kaiser achieves a triumph; they do not care who does it as long as it is done, and the prayer of all Christendom should be for the success of the kaiser's plans, although we do not know exactly what they are or how far they extend.

Wherever a German has driven a stake in Palestine there is a bright spot; there is comfort, cleanliness and

improvement of every kind, and the German colonies scattered through that country are bits of paradise compared with the conditions that surround them. The Psalmist who exults over the oases in the desert, the Song of Solomon that extol the springs in dry places, express the feeling of modern travelers when they find a German settlement, and pray for the day to come when the entire area of Palestine may be given over to their control. Every other nationality—the French, the Italians, the Russians, the Greeks, and the Jews—have had their turn but have failed. The Germans are successful everywhere.

The proposed railroad from Damascus to Mecca follows very closely the ancient caravan road to Egypt, the most famous pathway in the world. Abraham and the patriarchs before the Israelites left Egypt, Rameses, Nebuchadnezzar, Sennacherib, Cambyses, Darius, Alexander the Great, Pompey, Titus, Saladin, Richard of the Lion Heart, Napoleon Bonaparte and others of the world's great heroes have led armies over it. The chariot wheels of Saul and Jonathan, Joab and Jeroboam, Ahab and Deborah have stirred its heated sands. David followed it northward in his war of conquest, the Assyrian hosts followed it southward to the destruction of Jerusalem; God's chosen people passed over it on their way to captivity at Babylon, and all the great migrations in Biblical history were centered upon that highway and its branches. Near the town of Dothan is the pit into which Joseph was cast by his brethren. "And lifting up their eyes they beheld a company of Ishmaelites from Gilead, with their camels, bearing spices and balm and myrrh, to carry it down to Egypt." "And they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ish-



maelites for twenty pieces of silver, and they brought Joseph into Egypt." It would be interesting for anyone to pass over this historic trail if it were not such a tedious, dreary and tiresome journey, taking forty-four days to make the fifteen hundred miles, with scarcely a green thing for the entire distance.



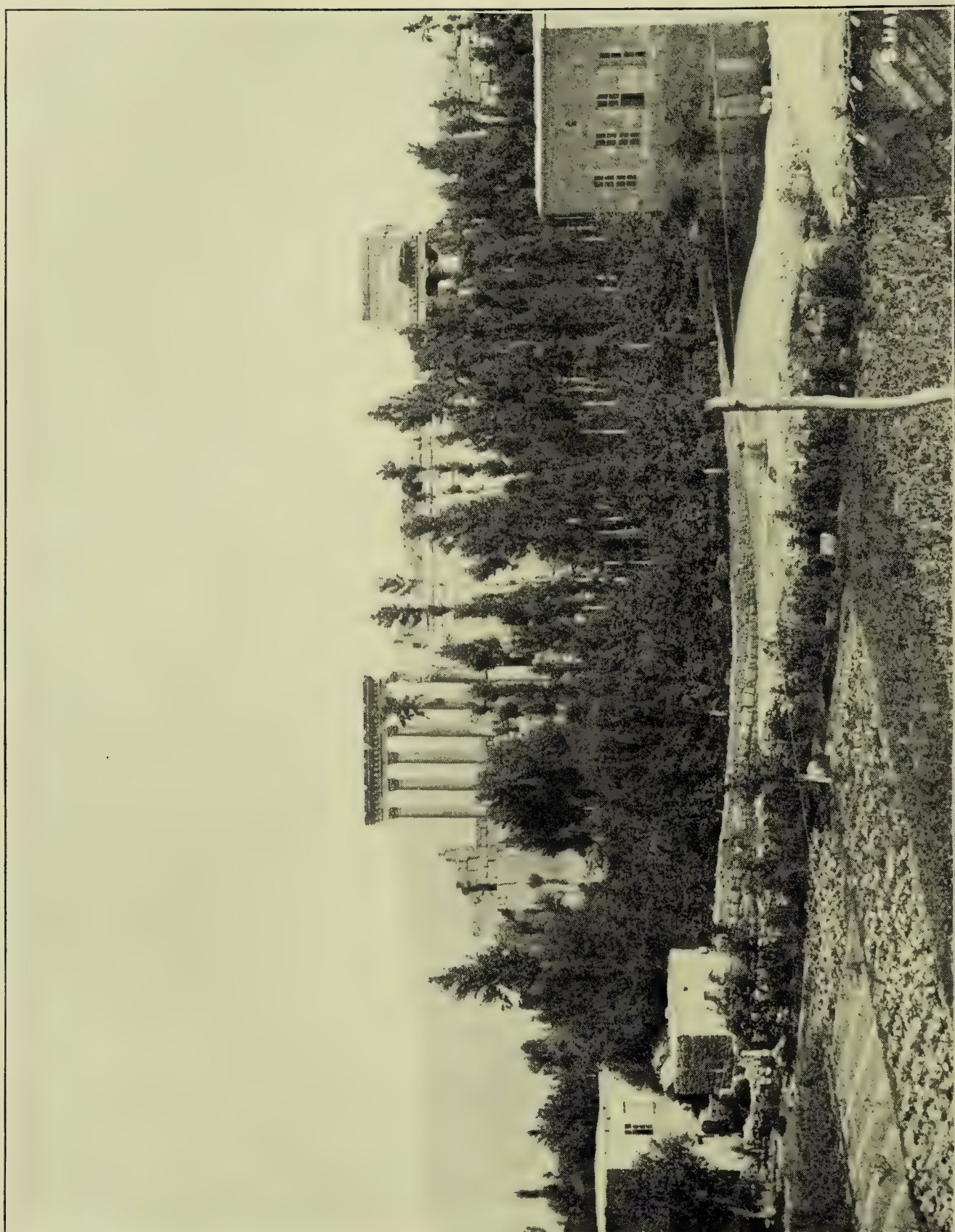


VIII  
The Wonderful Walls of Baalbek









BAALBECK.



## VIII

### THE WONDERFUL WALLS OF BAALBEK

To architects and archeologists especially and to all the world in general few places are more interesting than the little town of Baalbek for several reasons. It is supposed to have been founded by Cain, the son of Adam, when he fled from the murder of Abel, and there he erected the first of all fortifications to defend himself against possible pursuers. He named the place in honor of his son Henok and peopled it with giants, who, from their stronghold, carried on warfare against the inhabitants of the surrounding country until they perished in the flood. Nimrod, "the mighty hunter," was one of the early settlers at Baalbek, and certain historians identify the place with the Scriptural Babel, where that audacious man attempted to defy the gods and reach heaven by means of a high tower. Nimrod has the credit of being the founder of idolatry and Baalbek the scene of the first worship of idols. There are other interesting traditions and legends connected with the town, and the extraordinary size of the blocks of stone used in the construction of the temples to Baal and other heathen gods has excited the interest of mathematicians and archeologists of all generations who have exercised their ingenuity in theorizing about the physical phenomena they find here. One theory is that the temples at Baalbek were constructed in the days of the mastodon, because no other animals could possibly have hauled the mighty pillars from the quarry to their present places in the walls.

Abraham spent some time at Baalbek, and other patriarchs, prophets, judges and kings made it their

home. Baalbek was half way between Tyre and Palmyra, and was one of the depots for the trade which Solomon established between the Euphrates and Egypt. As Damascus refused to submit to his domination, that wise king of Israel erected here a rival city, and, in order to please his concubines, built a splendid castle and a magnificent temple in honor of Baal, in the town which bore the name of that god. Baalbek means "seat of Baal," and is believed to have been the headquarters of his worshipers, who were mostly Phoenicians and Canaanites. Baal was the solar divinity, the source of all life and happiness, and it was perfectly natural that the ancients should worship the sun, for obvious reasons. The customs, the religious theories and the forms of worship of the Phoenicians are strikingly similar to those of the Aztecs in Mexico and the Incas in Peru, and people find in that fact confirmation of the theory that the American continent was settled by the far-sailing inhabitants of Baalbek and the surrounding country before the age of Solomon. While nobody can prove the truth or the fallacy of this proposition, it may be said that the resemblances pointed out in the manners and customs of the races that inhabited this region and those that lived in the mountains of Mexico and the Andes was doubtless due to a similarity of conditions rather than a relationship of race. If you place two men in the same surroundings, with the same limitations and the same facilities, at the uttermost parts of the earth, they will adjust themselves to their environment in a similar manner. This great law of nature will account for the striking likenesses to Oriental types and habits that we find among the Incas and the Aztecs.



During all the discussion which has continued for thousands of years the monstrous blocks of limestone imbedded in these superb monuments have preserved their secrets, indifferent to the curiosity and unmoved by the admiration of mankind. The most plausible theory is that the temples and fortresses were originally constructed by the Phoenicians who preceded the Canaanites in this country and lived here immediately after the flood. They were masters of all mechanical arts; they were the most daring and enterprising of pioneers; they penetrated all quarters of the world; they developed mines; they supplied gold, silver, copper and lumber to the nations that surrounded them, and their energy and industry left impressions upon every territory they touched. You may see their traces in Spain, in Italy, in Asia and Africa; it is perfectly natural that this mighty race should erect the greatest of all temples to their own god and embellish it with surpassing magnificence and splendor.

The quarries from which the material was taken are located not far from the town—less than a mile distant, and extend along the base of the mountain for a considerable distance. Some of them were worked to so great a depth as to suggest that they must have furnished material for more buildings than the temples and palaces of Baalbek, and it is quite possible that stone was shipped from them to Palmyra, Damascus and other cities in the neighborhood. The material for modern buildings in the town comes from another quarry farther south, where the limestone is white, soft and easily wrought.

The ancient quarries show clearly the enormous thickness of the rock formation and the peculiar conditions which enabled the builders to cut out blocks of

any desired dimensions. The greater problem is their method of transportation. Work in the quarries seems to have been suddenly suspended, and the largest block of stone ever known to have been quarried now lies near the quarry, where it appears to have been left abruptly and for some reason which we cannot explain. It is seventy feet long, fourteen feet thick in one direction and nearly fifteen in the other, measuring 13,500 cubic feet and weighing, according to the estimates, 1,500 tons. This great block was detached from the mass of natural rock in the quarry, and a space of about six inches seems to have been cut away to separate it. It was rough-hewn, and ready to be moved, but the place to which it was to be taken and the purpose for which it was intended are unknown. It is said to be the largest piece of artificially detached stone in the world.

In the walls of the temple, which stands upon the summit of the Acropolis, and was undoubtedly erected for the worship of the sun, are other cyclopiian blocks of similar size. The keystone of one of the arches by which the temple was entered is a monument of itself, being eleven feet high, twelve feet thick, eight feet broad and weighing about seventy tons. In 1751 it was perfect, but the earthquake of 1759 fractured the massive monoliths which served as door posts, and shook the lofty architrave so rudely that this ponderous keystone slipped from its original position and sank about three feet. There it remained suspended for nearly a century and a half, until a German engineer, by means of a most ingenious device, restored it to its former position and braced it so firmly that it may outlive many more centuries.

In the outside wall, laid so closely that a needle



could not be inserted between them, are other marvelous blocks of stone. The largest is sixty-four feet in length, the next sixty-three feet eight inches, and the third sixty-three feet. They are all of the same dimensions otherwise, being thirteen feet square. Each measures more than 32,000 cubic feet and must weigh nearly 1,000 tons, the largest masses of stone ever handled by man. They were cut and polished with the same exactness and care that was devoted to the smaller blocks in the wall. Stones measuring thirty and thirty-five feet in length and twelve and thirteen feet square are common, and those measuring twenty, twenty-two and twenty-four feet by thirteen are scarcely noticed.

Engineers are puzzled when they consider the means by which the cyclopiian blocks were brought from the quarry and lifted to the elevated position they occupy, for some of them are placed in the walls a hundred feet from the ground. It is claimed by many archeologists that the wall was built before the invention of the derrick or the lever. The most popular theory is that they were brought on rollers up an inclined plane of earth which was built higher as the wall grew. One can speculate as much as he likes and perhaps may approach the truth, but there is a permanent disappointment in realizing that the controversy can never be settled.

It is unnecessary for me to describe the temples of Baalbek, because books have been written about them. A mere tourist, a visitor for a day, can only express his amazement and admiration, and leave the details to be told by those who have given them close and careful study. It is enough to say that these ruins are the most gigantic examples of ancient archi-

ture in existence, and that the Temple of the Sun is the largest, the most perfect and probably was the most magnificent ever erected. It was surpassed in beauty but not in size by the Pantheon at Athens, but nowhere else was there anything to approach it. The Emperor Constantine adapted the heathen temple to Christian worship. When the Mohammedans obtained possession of the country they converted them into mosques, and so races and the religions have succeeded each other—Phoenician, Canaanite, Hebrew, Assyrian, Greek, Roman, Saracen, Christian, Tartar and Turk—they have all been here and each has worshiped his own god within their walls.

During the last thirteen centuries the Turks have used the temple as a fortress and have destroyed and defaced much of its architectural and artistic beauty. The convulsions of nature have also done great damage. The walls have been overthrown, the roofs have fallen in, columns and pillars have been shattered, but the symmetrical proportions, the boldness of the plan of construction, the delicate designs of the decorations can still be recognized as well as the vast dimensions.

The ruins are now being excavated and restored by the munificence of the emperor of Germany, who has exercised his political influence with the sultan to secure permission for his archeologists to work among them. The kaiser was there in 1898, and his quick perception recognized an opportunity that had been denied to other men. He erected in the Temple of the Sun a large tablet, with an inscription in German and Turkish testifying to his unchangeable friendship and his high regard for Abdul Hamid and his pleasure at visiting the ruins. Immediately upon his return to Berlin the German ambassador to Constantinople was



instructed to obtain a firmin to enable the archeologists to commence excavations. It is probable that no one else could have obtained the permission, but the representatives of the emperor have been engaged there for two years, employing 160 men, and have done an immense amount of valuable work. They have excavated to the floors temples which were half filled with rubbish. They have cleared the walls to their foundations; they have restored columns and pillars that had fallen in many places; they have built new masonry to sustain old arches; have repaired much of the damage done by the earthquakes and have removed all Arab construction so far as possible. It would require several chapters to describe all that they have accomplished, and it has been done in a careful, conscientious manner. To restore and to preserve one of the grandest relics of ancient civilization is the object Emperor William desires to accomplish, and the duty has been intrusted to most competent hands.

Professor Bruno Schultz and Dr. Heinrich Kohl arrived at Baalbek while I was there to relieve the former superintendent and custodian. They came from the University of Berlin, and when they presented their credentials to the governor-general at Damascus upon arrival, that functionary and all his household bowed their heads to the floor whenever the great name of the kaiser was spoken. The governor-general placed the whole country at the disposition of the scientists, gave orders to the military for their protection, and commanded the local officials to supply all their wants; for is not the German kaiser the best friend of the Turks?

The governor-general was very sorrowful. He had just lost his favorite wife and was overtaken with grief.

The sultan endeavored to console him by sending to Damascus a new wife from the imperial harem, but the widower refused to be comforted. The governor-general of Damascus was formerly governor of Constantinople, and is accused of having given the order for the massacre of the Armenians in 1896. The European powers made a united demand for his punishment. He was removed from his office in disgrace, and as soon as the representatives of the powers were engaged with other affairs was promoted to a more important post. Everybody says that he is fairly honest, according to the Turkish standard, and would be a good official if he were not so good a Moslem, and such a fanatic in religious affairs.

Along the way to Baalbek is a village named in honor of the prophet Elijah, which claims to be his birthplace. It is surrounded by beautiful vineyards and mulberry groves and has a Protestant chapel and school. Protestant chapels are numerous in that part of Syria, and are quite as interesting and inspiring as the caves and shrines and monuments that mark the supposed scenes of Scripture history.

At Hoba, it is said, Abraham overcame and cut to pieces the kings who had captured his nephew Lot, and several other places have been identified with his career in that country. There is no doubt that Abraham lived there at one time; there is no question that his flocks and herds were pastured upon the slopes of both the ranges of Lebanon; he lived a nomadic life like the Bedouins we saw in every direction, and he camped in the shade of the trees and drank at the spring where we followed his example.

There is no doubt, I say, of those facts, and it is hardly worth while to dispute the legends of the monks



and the Moslem moulahs who have located with great care the scene of every incident in Scripture history. In many cases they have shown great patience and much sagacity; in others they have either been led astray by their enthusiasm or their anxiety to accommodate the convenience of the pilgrims and the public, for any child might see that the pretensions are absurd.

Most of the sacred places associated with the patriarchs of the Old Testament are owned and occupied by the Mohammedans, who are generous and considerate toward strangers. The Mohammedans seem to have preserved the historic places in their charge because of their sanctity.

The town of Zahle is a sort of Christian headquarters and the residence of two bishops. There are thirteen Christian churches, including one Protestant, two large convents and seventeen schools, conducted by missionaries of different denominations, three by American and English missionaries. Zahle is a modern town of about 20,000 inhabitants, with considerable wealth and commerce and the only tannery in Syria.

Baalbek also has a number of interesting schools, maintained by English and American Protestants, Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics and other denominations. It is quite startling in that venerable place to hear yourself addressed in English by the children, and some of them utilize the accomplishments they have acquired at the American missionary schools to pester tourists to purchase relics supposed to have been found in the ruins of the temples, coarse embroideries made with their own hands and other articles that sane people do not want. But I suppose that if we are never called upon to endure any greater

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annoyances we ought to be willing to forgive them. Money is scarce up in that country, and every American and Englishman is supposed to be rich. If they are not, what would they be doing so far away from home? Acting upon such assumptions the natives of all that section exercise their talents to get a living out of the tourists.

At an elevation of about 6,000 feet above the sea, on the left of the road to Baalbek, is a group of the noblest specimens of the vegetable kingdom in the East, which are believed to be thousands of years old and the remnant of the far-famed cedars of Lebanon, of which David and Solomon sang, and from which came the timbers for the temple. Djebel-el-Arz (the mountain of the cedars), which rises 7,770 feet, is generally covered with snow, and the day we were there it was draped in a mantle of unusual thickness, which trailed away into the forest and the foothills; for there was a heavy rain and a sharp frost the night before. The term Mount Lebanon is misleading. There is no peak of that name, which is applied to a lofty range with several conspicuous summits extending about one hundred miles from the neighborhood of Damascus to the sea and being about twenty-five miles broad from base to base. The most elevated peaks are those that I have just named, and Mount Hermon, 9,383 feet; Dahar-el-Kudhib, 10,020 feet; Jebel-Makmal, 10,016; El Miskych, 10,037; Fum-el-Mizab, 9,900; Sannin, 8,900 feet. These peaks are broken by rugged ridges, precipitous cliffs and deep gorges. A parallel range, which does not reach so great a height, is known as Anti-Lebanon.

When the word Lebanon is used the higher range is meant, and it is referred to frequently in the Bible.



You will remember that Moses begged earnestly of Jehovah, "Let me go over, I pray thee, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan and that goodly Mountain Lebanon," of which he had doubtless heard in Egypt, for its glory extended over the entire world. The patriarchs and the poets of the Bible praised Lebanon and sang of its forests, the snows that crowned its summits and the streams that bathe its feet. The Romans and the Greeks never tired of describing its beauties, its climate and its forests. The Arab poets use it as an illustration of grandeur, symmetry and strength. It is a proverb that Lebanon bears winter upon its head, spring upon its shoulders, autumn in its lap and that summer lies always at its feet. The mountain gorges have become popular summer resorts, and are sought by the inhabitants of the plains and the seacoast for health and enjoyment. The cool, fresh air and the balsam of the forests are unfailing restoratives, particularly to those who have suffered from the malignant Syrian and Egyptian fevers. The hotel accommodations as yet are primitive, and it is difficult to get luxurious or even comfortable quarters during the heat of summer; but they are improving gradually, and before long Lebanon will be provided with all that is needful in the way of food and shelter for invalids and others who occupy the east coast of the Mediterranean and the feverish valley of the Nile.

There are other attractions in Lebanon besides the scenery, the climate and the cedars. The territory is divided among twenty-four famous families, who can trace their pedigree to the flood, and whose ancestors occupied and dominated this region at the time when the Israelites were making bricks for the Pharaohs.

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The oldest dynasty in Europe is insignificant in its lineage beside them, and there is no doubt that their pretensions are genuine. The tenure of the land, the recognition of their feudal rights by the government and the people is sufficient. Most of them claim direct descent from the sons of Noah, and can rattle off genealogies similar to those in the Bible. They remind me of a man down in southern Spain, who made similar pretensions, and designed a family tree whose branches spread into all nations and whose roots were planted in a sort of tablet, upon which he inscribed: "About this time the world was created." It would not be difficult for any of these families to trace their ancestry back to Eden by adding the Biblical list to their own pedigrees; and the accuracy with which the genealogies are kept gives confidence in their reliability. Unfortunately there is great rivalry and jealousy between these native princes, who have been engaged in conspiracies and revolutions against the authorities and feuds and vendettas among themselves for thousands of years. Assassinations, murders and warfare have kept their numbers down and they are gradually becoming extinct, for which nobody but those immediately interested is sorry. With their pride and pedigrees and jealousies they have not only involved the entire population in continuous squabbles, but have blocked the wheels of progress and prevented the development of the country.

Of all the mighty forests which formerly covered the slopes of Lebanon only five remain to-day, and they are limited in area. The loftiest trees and those most celebrated for their antiquity are found near the town of Becherre at an altitude of 6,300 feet and are known as "The Cedars of God"—"The Cedars of Lebanon



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which He hath planted"; according to the botanists, who count the age of the trees by the circles in their trunks, they are 3,000 or 4,000 years old. Like the immortal cliffs that tower above them, they have watched the passage of a procession of kings down the centuries, led by David, Solomon and Hiram, with a rear guard commanded by Kaiser William II. of Germany.

They are not so large nor so lofty as the great trees of California, but their antiquity and associations make them the most sacred and the most interesting groves in the world, and pilgrims come here to worship them. The best authorities are sure that we make no mistake when we revere them as the survivors of that forest whence Hiram obtained the timber for Solomon's temple. The logs must have been carried down to the coast by hand, conveyed by sea in rafts to Jaffa and thence carried over the mountains to Jerusalem. In those days there were no other means of conveyance. It is said that thirty thousand men were at work in the forest for twelve years and relieved each other every month in bodies of ten thousand men, who were organized and managed like an army. David obtained here the timber for his palace, and Zerubbabel in constructing the second temple. The timbers in the Temple of Diana at Ephesus and in the temples of Baalbek came from the same forests, and we know that the Phoenicians shipped much cedar to Greece, to Egypt and to other places on the coast of the Mediterranean, not only before but for centuries after the days of Hiram, the mighty king of Tyre.

The remaining forest consists of about four hundred trees. The tallest exceeds one hundred feet and the largest is fifty-six feet in circumference.

In the midst of the forest is the small chapel in which

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the Maronites worship and where they hold great feasts on the anniversary of the Transfiguration and other ecclesiastical holidays. Below the forest is a beautiful lake about half a mile in length and a quarter of a mile in breadth, fed by innumerable springs that gush from the surrounding rocks. Upon the bank was once a temple to Venus, and according to mythology (and the same story is told of the Egyptian goddess Isis) that amiable lady took refuge here when she fled from the Typhon who had killed Adonis, and transformed herself into a fish. Her daughter, Dercetis, was her companion and suffered a similar fate.



IX

By Tugboat to Tyre and Sidon





## IX

### BY TUGBOAT TO TYRE AND SIDON

We had to charter a little steamer or tugboat to take us down the coast from Beirut, because the passenger packets that stop at the small ports run only once a fortnight. An old proverb advises us always to speak well of the ship that carries us over, and we are under many obligations to the Prince George, a little boat, which served us safely that day. We were not very uncomfortable, although it rolled and pitched and indulged in certain centrifugal convolutions that were decidedly disturbing to the inner man. It appeared to be trying to show us how closely it could describe the trail of a corkscrew without turning over and succeeded much better than the average imitator. An ambitious boat and a contrary sea can accomplish more eccentric curves than the men who make crazy posters. But worse things might have happened; we might have been drowned or cast away upon a desert island, for example, and ought to be duly thankful. There are worse things than being seasick.

Perhaps our safety was due to the piety of our captain and his crew, who were devout Mohammedans, and who when the proper hours came, at nine in the morning, at noon and at five o'clock in the afternoon, spread their coats upon the deck, because they had no prayer rugs, turned their faces toward Mecca and went through their devotions with a zeal and solemnity that was a rebuke to all Christendom. I do not know a Methodist or a Presbyterian or a Baptist sailor who would drop his work in the middle of the day and

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kneel down before the crew and passengers of a ship and say his prayers as regularly as those Moslems did. When the hour came around a West Indian negro, who could talk English and declared that he had no religion, although he wore beads to protect him from the evil eye, took the wheel so that the captain might say his prayers, and the latter solemnly went through his devotions on the deck outside the pilot-house.

The ancient town of Sidon is twenty-seven miles south of Beirut, and at present is a place of small importance compared with its former prestige. Tyre, the far-famed capital of the ancient Phoenician Empire, is twenty-two miles farther down the coast. Both, by reason of their Biblical and historical associations, are among the most interesting places in Palestine, but, for lack of steamship facilities, the average tourist usually passes them by. Four thousand years ago Tyre and Sidon were commercial rivals. Both were celebrated for their commerce, their luxury and their vices, and both sank under "the burden of the Word of the Lord, for the Lord hath spoken it." Tyre not only contributed to the Temple of Solomon and to the luxury and wealth of all the world, but Tyrian purple was worn by every king. Agamemnon, the king of kings, and Achilles, the General Miles of the Trojan War, wore armor manufactured in Sidon, for the Sidonians were cunning artisans in metal and weavers of fine fabrics as well as bold mariners and enterprising merchants.

We read of both cities in the Iliad and the Odyssey. They were famous long before the siege of Troy or the exodus of the Israelites. Their wealth exposed them to invasions from the Assyrians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Egyptians and the Romans, and Sidon



was quite destroyed 1,300 years before Christ by the Askalonites. In 720 B. C. the Sidonians assisted Shalmaneser, King of Assyria, to overcome Tyre, and several centuries later Tyre returned the compliment by joining Artaxerxes, King of Persia, and assisting to slaughter forty thousand of the inhabitants of Sidon. Alexander the Great besieged both cities; the Egyptian Pharaohs came up and looted both cities on several occasions, and the Roman emperors robbed them again and again. By the wayside, in the suburbs of Sidon, is a large granite column bearing an inscription by which those two mighty emperors, Septimus Severus and his son, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, endeavored to immortalize themselves by informing posterity that they mended the road.

Christianity took root at Sidon early, and Christ visited the coast, although we have no record in the New Testament of His preaching in either city. Paul stopped at Sidon on his way to Rome, and other of the apostles came here frequently. Both cities were fought over during the Crusades, and Sidon was the headquarters of the Knights Templar for many years, but was finally captured by the Saracens, and the whole coast has since been subject to the Moslems.

It is one of the local traditions that sugar cane originated here; was carried to Europe by the returning Crusaders, and when America was discovered was introduced into the West Indies by the Spanish monks. The people do not make sugar any longer, however; they still grow cane, but cut it up into short lengths and sell it in bundles to the peasants, who chew it for the juice.

A series of ruined towers all along the coast are said to have continued from Jerusalem to Constantinople in

sight of each other, and, according to tradition, were erected by St. Helena in order that she might convey by signal to her imperial son, Constantine the Great, the tidings of the discovery of the true cross, for which she was searching the Holy City.

Saida is the modern name of ancient Sidon, and it contains about 12,000 inhabitants, of whom 600 are Jews, 300 Protestants, 2,500 Roman Catholics, 2,500 Greeks and the rest Moslems. The Protestants have several schools and a church maintained by the American Presbyterian Board of Missions; the Franciscans have a church, a monastery, and a school for boys; the Jesuits have the same, the Sisters of St. Joseph, a school and orphanage, and the orthodox Greeks, Israelites and other denominations have missions. The chief export at present is fruit. Oranges and lemons, almonds, apricots and bananas are extensively cultivated and shipped to Egypt, Constantinople and France. The town is surrounded with beautiful gardens and groves, which occupy the entire plain, an area of several miles between the mountains and the sea.

Upon a hill that projects into the sea is the castle of St. Louis, built by the Crusaders, and it is a picturesque land mark. At the southern end of the town is an extensive Necropolis which offers the most remarkable evidence of the ancient wealth and importance of the town that can be imagined. Rectangular chambers about ten by twelve feet square are excavated in the solid rock and were used as vaults for the burial of rich citizens. Some of them were stuccoed with cement and decorated in Pompeian style; others show evidence of having been faced with mosaics, and all formerly contained sarcophagi of marble, porphyry,



lead, clay and other material highly decorated with carvings, paintings and other enrichments. The tomb chambers, however, have been looted of everything of value by vandals. The robbery probably began at the time of the Crusades. Here were found the sarcophagus of Alexander the Great, which is now exhibited in the museum at Constantinople, and other burial urns and cases of great artistic beauty, which have been shipped to museums in almost every great city. In 1855 was discovered the basalt sarcophagus of the Sidonian king, Eshmunazar, now in the Louvre at Paris, and the lid bears a long Phoenician inscription. This heathen king, like Shakespeare, invoked a curse upon the vandal who should disturb his bones. In 1887 seventeen fine Greek and Phoenician marble tombs were discovered and sent to Constantinople, and, although no systematic excavation has been made here, it is certain that many treasures still remain buried. People are constantly finding rare things. Some years ago a party of workmen, while digging for the foundation of a house in a grove of mulberry trees, unearthed several copper pots containing about \$12,000 worth of gold coin issued by Alexander the Great and Philip of Macedon. They appeared to be fresh from the mint, and some of them were as bright as the day on which they were coined. It is evident that they were buried by somebody who had access to the royal treasure chest and was unable to recover them. The workmen went wild with excitement and astonishment. The news of their discovery soon spread through the city, and hundreds of people brought shovels and spades to dig up the rest of the grove. More energy was displayed in Sidon than at any time since the Crusaders, but nothing of value was unearthed. The governor of

the city calmly took possession of the coin, and is said to have forwarded it to the sultan, but if he did so his imperial master must have melted up the gold, for only a few of the coins ever got into the hands of the dealers, and those were pilfered. As soon as the facts were published there was a great demand for them. The general impression is that the governor was the sole beneficiary of the find.

Sidon must have been much larger than at present, for evidences of its extent are found everywhere in the gardens and groves that surround it. Columns of marble, broken statuary, carved stone and other building material are discovered deep in the soil. You must remember that Sidon was a very old city even at the time of Solomon, having been founded, according to Josephus, by Sidon, the eldest son of Canaan, and the grandson of Noah. At the time of the invasion of Canaan by the Israelites under Joshua it was the chief city of the Phoenicians. Phoenicia means the "land of palms" and was applied to this country by the Greeks. The Hebrew name was Canaan, and wherever the latter is used in the Bible it refers to the territory occupied by the descendants of Noah's grandson, Canaan, who were known as Phoenicians by other foreigners. They were the most remarkable people of their age, and the limited territory they occupied bore no proportion to the wealth they possessed or the influence they exerted. Beginning immediately after the flood, they became the pioneers of all the earth in commerce, art and industry, and for twenty-five centuries practically monopolized the trade of the world. The Israelites in those days exerted no influence in the development and progress of the human race; they contributed nothing to its wealth or commerce or



knowledge. They did not seek distinction in art, science, literature or trade. They were content to rest upon their historic traditions and their sacred claims as the chosen people of God, while the Canaanites or Phoenicians, whom they displaced, engaged with eagerness and zeal in all the pursuits that attracted the enterprise of men. They excelled all other nations in shipbuilding, navigation and the useful arts; they carried to Europe the superior accomplishments of the East and brought back the tin of England, the copper of Spain, the amber of the Baltic, the iron of Sweden, and exchanged them for the spices, gems and costly fabrics of India, Arabia and Egypt. They taught the barbarous races of Europe the arts and trades; they gave them the alphabet and a written language, the sciences of astronomy, geography and mineralogy, and spread knowledge in every direction.

Tyre was the capital of the Phoenicians and 4,000 years ago was the greatest of existing cities. To-day it is a sleepy old town, under the name of Sur, of about 5,000 inhabitants, with several monasteries and missionary schools, and does a small coasting trade with the neighboring towns in fruit, cotton, tobacco and millstones. The only interesting objects for the visitor are the ruins, the tombs and the Crusaders' Church, which was built in 1125, and fortunately has been preserved from the wrath and neglect of the Moslems. It contains the body of Frederic Barbarossa, the great German emperor, who died in 1190.

The harbor is filled with the ruins of palaces, temples and other magnificent edifices that made Tyre the wonder of the world, but to-day the streets are narrow, crooked, filthy and full of smells. There is nothing

attractive about the place or the people. Even nature has become stern and desolate since the curses of Isaiah, Ezekiel and the other prophets of the Lord fell upon the richest and most profligate community of ancient times.

For centuries Tyrian purple was the color of kings, and the robes of the rulers of all mankind, in Christendom at least, were dyed with the blood of a shell fish called the murex, which was formerly found all along the coast and is now most abundant in the Bay of Acre. It was the most celebrated of all dyes. It is spoken of in the Bible, and even in the remote age Homer sings of "belts that, rich with Tyrian dye, refulgent glowed." Pliny, who was the first great naturalist, says that the Phoenicians ground the shells of the murex in mills to procure the dye, but modern naturalists say that the best coloring matter was obtained from a gland in the body of the insect, which yielded only one or two drops as precious as jewels. This was first carefully separated and then the blood was squeezed out of the rest of the body of the insect, which made a dye of an inferior quality. The remains of shells in pits along the shore seem to indicate that Pliny was wrong and that the naturalists are right, but it is a lost art. In the neighborhood of Sidon the great piles of murex shells from which the insect has been taken indicate the enormous destruction of that kind of life to fill the demand for the dye.

Another insect found in this locality, called the *Helix ianthina*, yields a delicate lilac shade of dye, and a species of *Buccinum* yields a dark crimson, but neither were as abundant or as famous as the Tyrian purple.

Just south of Tyre, in a little village called Hana-



weh, is the tomb of King Hiram, friend and ally of David and Solomon. It is the most important and striking monument of that period of the earth's civilization which time has spared. Nothing remaining in an original position compares with it for antiquity, and there is no reason to believe that it has been disturbed since the days of Solomon. Large broken sarcophagi around it are supposed to have been once occupied by King Hiram's mother, wife, and other members of the family, but there is no definite evidence. That his tomb is genuine, we can rest upon the inscriptions and unmistakable marks of antiquity. The base or pedestal consists of two tiers of enormous blocks of granite thirteen feet long, nine feet broad and three feet thick, which were carefully dressed and laid. Upon these lies one huge block of stone about fifteen by twelve feet in size and nearly four feet thick, the edges of which were formerly chiseled with a design resembling what we call a "wall of Troy," but the most of it has been chipped away. Upon this block lies the sarcophagus, twelve feet four inches long, eight feet broad and six feet high, which was hollowed out to receive the body. Of course it is empty now. The tomb is supposed to have been despoiled in the time of the Crusaders, but fortunately was not destroyed. The lid is in the shape of a pyramid, five feet thick and badly broken.

In my Sunday school days I was puzzled by that part of the story of the prodigal son which tells of his feeding upon "the husks that the swine did eat." Children and people generally fancy that the husks of corn are meant, when such things are not found in Palestine, and we all know that man nor beast could not eat, or at least digest, the tough fibers that protect the ears

of corn. It is therefore with a sense of relief and personal gratification that I have discovered that the few swine in Palestine (for they are very scarce) are fed upon the husks of a species of the locust tree, known to botany as the *Ceratonia Siliqua*, commonly called St. John's bread. The pods or husks, as they are commonly called, are gelatinous, juicy, sweet and pleasant to the taste. They are fed to sheep and cattle as well as to hogs and are both nourishing and fattening. When they are thoroughly ripe people often crush them and squeeze out the juice, which, mixed with cool water, makes a very refreshing beverage. Therefore, the prodigal son was not so badly off for food as I supposed, for there is no doubt that the luncheon of the swine which he was compelled to share was the husks of St. John's bread.

The three Semitic races which now inhabit the Holy Land, the Jews, Arabs and Assyrians, all have a deep intellectual character, a rich poetic sentiment and a lively imagination, but no capacity for reasoning. They have not produced any system of philosophy nor developed their poetic instincts to a degree that will compare with the poetry of the Greeks, Latins, French, Germans or English, and have shown no taste for the fine arts. Their minds continually dwell upon abstract propositions, and they seem to be satisfied with their own thoughts without acquiring those of others. Their libraries and schools are few. They have never had a university. The Arabs have their own literature, rich in poetic sentiment, humor and fancy, but they know nothing of the literature of other nations. They have a high regard for scholarship, but spend no money for schools; they appreciate the value of learning, but are too indolent to study any-



thing but the maxims of their own pundits; and the traditions of their own race are sufficient for their satisfaction without taking the trouble to inquire into the history of other races.

As is the case with all ignorant people the pride and vanity of the Arabs and Syrians are unsurpassed. They believe that the land in which they live is superior to any other upon the footstool, and that they have been more favored than other races by being permitted to live there. They cannot conceive of anything more beautiful or majestic than the mountains of Lebanon, and the landscapes that are spread out daily before their eyes; they actually indulge in an amiable pity for those who are not allowed to live in Palestine, and often wonder whether the inhabitants of other nations can be as happy and comfortable and contented as they are in the midst of their squalor and wretchedness. Their arrogance is not often offensive, however. They are careful not to wound the feelings of strangers by exulting in their own superiority, but at the same time they do not attempt to conceal it. They have a theory that tourists come to this country because it is so much more attractive than their own, and are willing to allow them to enjoy its attractions undisturbed.

The Bedouins and other inhabitants of the interior are far more conscious of their own superiority over the rest of mankind than the Greeks and other Christians who live in the towns on the coast, and know something of foreign countries, either by having visited them, or by contact with foreigners, or from the reports of friends who have traveled or emigrated. The Palestine Jews are scornful toward Christians, but never boast like the Arabs. The Greeks who have

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lived in foreign countries and have returned to reside here often describe accurately the conditions of other places, but their statements are considered exaggerations, for it is impossible that any country could be so fair and rich, or any people so intelligent, accomplished and industrious as the Arabs.

There are several kinds of Jews. The Sephardim are the descendants of those who were expelled from Spain at the time of Ferdinand and Isabella. Many of them succeeded in reaching Palestine, where they have since lived, scrupulously observing the habits and customs of their ancestors, wearing the same costumes so far as they are suitable for the present day and speaking the common Spanish language. The Ashkenazim Jews are from Russia, Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia and Germany, and speak with a peculiar accent. The Perushim are the descendants of the ancient Pharisees; the Chasidim are descendants of the Sadducees; the Karaiters, who reject the Talmud and adhere to the original Mosaic laws, were formerly very strong, but have been growing gradually weaker and are now almost extinct. These several classes of Jews may be distinguished by their physiognomy and by their dress. The men are generally tall, and slender, with stooping shoulders and full beards. They wear a sort of tunic of cotton print under their black robes and their turbans are made from grayish shawls or scarfs. The Sephardim wear black turbans. The Polish and Bohemian Jews wear in front of the ears curls reaching almost to the chin and giving them a very peculiar appearance.

The Arabs, like the Spaniards, have a proverb to illustrate every possible situation in life and every homely little incident. They are full of superstitions



and have interpretations for all signs and omens, some of which are very odd. They are constantly consulting the stars and other natural phenomena and their common conversation abounds in proverbs, some of which are inherited from Solomon. We are told that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs and that his songs numbered 1,005, so that comparatively few have been preserved to us. Most of them have perished. Solomon will stand to the world's end as the wisest and most learned of men, yet we do not know where he got his education. He is said to have spoken all the known tongues of his time and to have understood the languages of birds, beasts and fishes, which I suppose Thompson-Seton and L. O. Howard of Washington can do. I would set L. O. Howard up against Solomon any day for an expert in the bug languages. He is the entomologist of the Agricultural Department. I have known hunters and trappers out West who understood the bear and catamount languages just as well as they understood Indian. Billy Hofer, one of the guides out in the Yellowstone Park, can talk bear and understand it, at least he says he can, and it has saved him a heap of trouble. It is just as convenient for a man to be able to talk bear in the forests and gorges of the Rocky Mountains as it is to talk French in Paris or Turkish in Constantinople. It helps along wonderfully.

Many of the proverbs of Solomon are in current use to-day among the people of Palestine, although those who utter them are entirely unconscious of their origin. Your teamster or the Arab porter who handles your trunks, and other natives with whom you come in contact, often quote maxims as wise and witty as any Solomon ever invented. For example, it is a common

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saying in Constantinople that people who visit the sultan should enter the palace blind and come out dumb, which is the very best of advice.

"He who holds a secret of the sultan's should immediately emigrate," is another political proverb.

"His business is soon dispatched who sends a present before him," is current among the people who visit the officials of the government.

"In the time of trouble you will discover who are your friends," is another equally applicable.

"Three things give one a fever—a lazy messenger, a lamp that gives a poor light and a guest that is late for dinner."

"He wanders who takes a blind man for his guide."

"For four things there is no recall—the spoken word, the sped arrow, the act of a fool and time mis-spent."

The Arabs have gathered the material for their proverbs from a close observation of nature and the dispositions of men. They have applied them to every conceivable thing, visible and invisible, above and below, sickness and health, life and death, joy and sorrow, trees, plants and flowers, rain, snow and wind, birds and beasts and creeping things, and every attribute, peculiarity, habit and whim of all the inhabitants of the great world, and their signs and omens are taken from the same sources. Some of the superstitions are quite odd. For example, there are haunted trees, supposed to be the abode of evil spirits. In order to propitiate them people hang little bits of rags upon the limbs and branches just as the Japanese attach paper prayers to trees in the same manner. It is only an act of courtesy or recognition, however. It does not go any farther, but it pleases the evil spirit and protects



the wayfarer from his ill will. You see many such trees in different parts of the country, decorated with hundreds of little strips of cloth. The children avoid them and a superstitious man would not sit under one for the world.





X

Footprints of the Prophet Elijah





## X

### FOOTPRINTS OF THE PROPHET ELIJAH

Mount Carmel is one of the most beautiful of hills. Its slopes are always covered with verdure, flowers and sweet herbs, nurtured by the dew which was famous in scriptural times. The original name, Kerm-el, means "the garden," or "vineyard of God." In Bible times, as now, it was not only a prominent landmark, visible up and down the coast from Jaffa on the south to Tyre and Sidon northward, but produced fat harvests of olives and grapes, and a profusion of flowers, plants and shrubs. The odorous thyme grows in great masses, wild roses climb over every rock, and the earth is covered with a variety of ground orchids. No other part of the country yields such olives and grapes and nowhere else are the sheep and cattle so well fed. In Bible times, as now, Carmel was the abode of hermits and the asylum of fugitives from justice who dwelt in the caves and grottoes which are numerous on both slopes among the limestone ledges. Amos says, "Though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence." The mountain was a sanctuary and a place of worship from the earliest times. It was claimed both for Baal and for Jehovah. Both had altars near the crest where the priests of the rival religions, as told in the vivid language of the book of Kings, entered upon an awful debate to determine which was supreme. The struggle took place in one of the sublimest landscapes conceivable, a charming vision of earth and sea and sky.

Carmel is rather a ridge than a mountain, as it extends at about an even height of 1,700 feet for a distance of eighteen miles, being cut at intervals the entire distance with abrupt ravines and deep gorges. It runs at right angles from the coast and the western end is a bold promontory 550 feet in height, which projects into the sea. At the other end is a series of rocky terraces leading down into the famous plain of Esdraelon, where the great miracle of Elijah took place.

Carmel separates this famous plain on the north from the equally celebrated plain of Sharon on the south, and at the eastern end sinks gradually into the wooded hills of Samaria. There are ten or twelve villages upon its slopes, occupied by Moslems and Druses, most of them shepherds. One of these villages was the retreat of Lawrence Oliphant, an eccentric Englishman, who endeavored to benefit his fellow man without much success. He once started a colony in California, but it was a failure, owing to the unwillingness of the beneficiaries to work for their board, or some similar reason, and, attracted by the success of the Temple Society, he went to Palestine, hoping to revive the languishing fortunes of the Jews. Oliphant's experience is told in his story, entitled "The Land of Gilead." He failed to obtain a concession from the Turkish government, hoping against hope from 1882 to 1888, while he resided in the German colony of Haifa and wrote novels.

Almost every spot on Carmel is associated with Bible history. Upon the promontory toward the sea is the Deir el Mar Elyas, an enormous Carmelite monastery, erected over the cave in which the Prophet Elijah is said to have made his home. There is very little doubt about the historical accuracy of the traditions of



Carmel. It is one of the few places in Palestine where you can be confident of seeing the real thing. There is no humbug there, and, although Elijah may not have lived in that particular cave, he certainly occupied for many years a cave in the immediate neighborhood. The accounts of events that occurred on Carmel are related with such detail in the Bible and the topography is so explicitly described that there can be no mistake. Anyone who has traveled in the Holy Land can appreciate the satisfaction.

I question, however, the assertion of Brother Felix, a consumptive American monk who showed us around, that Elijah was the founder of the Order of Carmelite Friars. Perhaps Brother Felix was "joshing" a heretical fellow countryman. He had a keen sense of humor, but said it with a sober face. Nobody knows definitely who founded the Carmelites, except that the founders were hermits, who lived in Elijah's cave for centuries. They were here before 1180, when the first monastery was built, and probably came with the Crusades. It is claimed by some that the Empress Helena put up the first building, while others attribute it to St. Louis, the Crusader king of France. Greek inscriptions in the cave are evidently older than the Christian era; Tacitus tells us that in his time there was an altar to the "god of Carmel," where the monastery now stands; Pythagoras, the great Greek philosopher, on a journey from Athens to Egypt, spent some time there, and the Emperor Vespasian consulted an oracle which occupied the spot.

The Carmelite order was officially recognized by Pope Honorius III. in 1224, and Carmel has always been its headquarters. The brotherhood and their buildings have been badly treated from time to time and

have patiently endured a great deal of persecution. Many of them have been killed and tortured. They have repeatedly been stripped of all their worldly possessions; the monastery has been destroyed several times and has twice been converted into a Mohammedan mosque. When Napoleon made his campaign in Palestine in 1799 the building was used as a hospital, and the monks nursed the soldiers, but upon his retirement the wounded and their nurses were massacred by the Turks and are buried under a small pyramid just outside the gate.

The present buildings are without doubt the finest that ever stood upon the site, and were erected by the indefatigable exertions of Brother Giovanni Battista of Frascati, Italy, who not only collected all the money, but drew the plans and superintended the construction himself, traveling through Europe and Asia to solicit funds as he needed them. The buildings are among the finest of the many monasteries in Palestine. They are three stories high and solidly built of stone. The ground floor is used for offices and kitchen, a dispensary and a hospice for poor pilgrims. The second floor is fitted up with neatly furnished bedrooms and other accommodations for travelers who are able to pay, while on the third floor are cells for sixty monks, a library, refectory, a hospital and other rooms. The bedrooms are especially inviting in their arrangement and appearance, and the monks are hospitable.

In the center of the building is a handsome chapel, elaborately decorated, with a good organ, a magnificent altar of onyx and some fine paintings. All the work has been done by the monks themselves, and they have collected the funds to pay the expense.

At the end of the promontory is a lighthouse for the



benefit of mariners. It was built by the Turkish government, which pays, or rather promises to pay, the monks for keeping up the light, but they have received no money for several years.

The monks have fine gardens and grow herbs, from which Chartreuse and Eau de Melisse, an aromatic liqueur, are brewed and sold to travelers. They also sell pressed flowers and other souvenirs to pilgrims.

In the center of the court before the lighthouse is a statue erected by the army of the Republic of Chile in honor of "Our Lady of Carmel," who was its patron saint during the war with Peru.

There are a number of caves in the neighborhood. In one of them, called "the School of Prophets," Elijah is supposed to have taught a class of young men. Another cave near by is said to be that in which Obadiah hid the prophets of the Lord when the wicked Queen Jezebel was after them.

On the point of the mountain facing east a little Catholic chapel and the remains of an old castle dating from the time of the Crusaders mark the scene of one of the most thrilling tragedies in the Bible. It occurred during the reign of the wicked king Ahab and his queen, Jezebel, who, by the way, was a daughter of the Phoenician king of Tyre and a grand-daughter of King Hiram, who supplied Solomon with material for his temple.

Elijah, the Tishbite, was the principal actor. To punish the king for his apostasy to the true God, and the queen for corrupting the faith of Israel by the use of power and patronage, the prophet prayed that rain might be cut off from the land, and the fountains of the heavens were shut up for three years and six months. The king sent Obadiah, governor of his

house, upon a scouting expedition to find water and grass "to save the horses and the mules alive, that we may not lose all the beasts." Obadiah had gone but a little way when he was astonished to meet Elijah, who had disappeared and could not be found either by the soldiers or the detectives of the king.

"As the Lord thy God liveth," exclaimed Obadiah, "there is no nation or kingdom whither my Lord has not sent to seek thee."

Elijah replied coolly, "Go tell thy Lord, Behold, Elijah is here."

The proud king was humbled. He obeyed the summons, but when he saw Elijah he asked sternly, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?"

The Tishbite gave the king a piece of his mind and offered to prove that the priests and prophets of Baal, who had been living around him under the patronage of Queen Jezebel, were imposters.

A trial by fire was proposed to test their power. Four hundred and fifty prophets and priests of Baal came to the place of sacrifice and called upon the heathen god in vain. Elijah mocked them, and the priests, goaded to frenzy, slashed themselves with knives, tore their hair and continued their appeals until "the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice."

Then Elijah suggested that they had had a fair show. It was his turn now. Taking twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, he repaired the altar of Jehovah which had been broken down by the priests of Baal and placed a sacrifice upon it. To make the trial doubly convincing he demanded that barrel after barrel of water be poured on until it "ran around about the altar and filled the trench." As he invoked the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and of



Israel, "to let it be known this day that I am Thy servant, and that I have done these things at Thy word," the fire of the Lord fell and not only consumed the sacrifices, but also the wood and the stones and the dust and licked up the water that was in the trenches.

The king, with the whole multitude, pronounced the verdict. Elijah said to the people, "Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape." They did so and "brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there." The place is still pointed out, and near by is Tell el Kussis (the mound of the priests), where their bodies are said to have been buried.

Then Elijah cast himself upon the ground, put his face between his knees, and prayed earnestly for rain; but it did not come until his servant had gone up to the top of the mountain seven times and looked out upon the blue waters of the Mediterranean. Then "a little cloud like a man's hand," was seen to rise from the sea. Elijah said to the king, "Prepare thy chariot and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not." In the meantime "the heaven was black with clouds and wind and there was a great rain," and the drought of three years and a half was brought to a close.

There is no dispute about the location of this great tragedy. The only question about the whole story has been where Elijah got the water with which his altar was drenched. There is no spring in the neighborhood. The Mediterranean is eighteen miles distant, and the nearest source would be the brook of Kishon, which never has water in the summer and must have been as dry as a bone after three years of drought.

At the foot of Mount Carmel, at one of the most beautiful points on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, has been established a colony of Germans from

Wurtemberg and the United States. It is an object lesson that the Turks and Arabs should study with profit, although I am told that they have not done so. The colonists have taken up about 1,800 acres of land, have erected comfortable houses of modern architecture and conveniences, built schoolhouses, cultivated vegetable gardens, planted vineyards, set out olive, fig and other fruit-bearing trees, and have tilled the fertile plains around them in an intelligent manner with labor-saving machinery, so that the earth has produced abundantly, and the advantage of using brains and modern implements in farming has been fully demonstrated. I am sure that the example of these thrifty and industrious people cannot be entirely lost upon the natives, but it is not apparent to the ordinary observer, for they still adhere to their ancient slovenly methods and filthy habits and are satisfied with the small returns they receive for their labor because their fathers received no more.

The Germans belong to what is known as the sect of the "Temple," or "Friends of Jerusalem," which was founded in 1857 by Wilhelm and Christian Hoffmann on the principle that the duty of Christianity is to found a kingdom of God on earth. The Hoffmanns were members of the Pietist branch of the Lutheran denomination in Wurtemberg, and attempted to persuade its members to join in the colonization of the Holy Land, but as they did not adopt the plan, a separate association, called the "Friends of Jerusalem," was organized to establish an ideal Christian community in the "Land of Promise" and to commence the regeneration of its people by offering an example of modern civilization and honest industry to the Gentiles and the Jews. Five colonies have been estab-



lished at Jerusalem, Haifa, Jaffa, Saron and in the valley of Rephaim.

The colony at Haifa was begun in 1869 and now includes 570 souls, of whom seventy-three are Americans. The remainder are from Wurtemberg and southern Russia. The interest of Americans in this colony is especially due to the fact that its leader was Jacob Schumaker of Buffalo, who was sent out by the members of the Temple Society in the United States in 1869 to select the location and secure the land. Christian Orldoff of Schenectady accompanied him. Having found the country around Mount Carmel to their taste, they bought a tract and obtained from the sultan a firman authorizing them to hold the titles in their own names. This, I believe, was the first time this privilege was granted to foreigners. Colonists came from the German Lutheran communities in Buffalo, Philadelphia, Schenectady and New York City, bringing American ideas, American methods and American tools and machinery with them.

The land was allotted to individuals and sold at a price proportionate to its cost, streets were laid out, reservations were made for churches and schoolhouses, hotels and other public purposes. Dr. Schumaker was appointed the head of the colony and remained as such until his death in 1890, when he was succeeded by his son, who is also the American consular agent. In addition to their farming, the colonists breed horses, cattle, sheep and poultry; they have a large soap factory, from which they ship the finest of castile soap to all parts of the world; they export olive oil and other local products; they contract for the erection of buildings in all parts of Palestine, having architects and engineers among their number; they furnish horses,



wagons and camping outfits to pilgrims and tourists; they keep tourists' hotels throughout Palestine (which are a comfort and a blessing, for they are always neat and comfortable) and do a great variety of other things.

The Haifa colony is a beautiful oasis in that great moral desert, and it is refreshing for travelers to find clean hotels, honest people and clean streets. But, as I have said, their example has made very little impression upon the natives, who are a mongrel race of Arabs, Ishmaelites, Assyrians, Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Turks and Jews, with a good deal of Crusader blood mixed in them. They will not work, nor will they adapt themselves to modern conditions. These sons of Ishmael and Esau prefer to live from hand to mouth for various reasons, and there is no inducement for them to accumulate wealth, because if they did they would be robbed of it by the officials. No man can accumulate capital in that country, no man can become better off than his neighbor without exciting the avarice of the Turks and exposing himself to blackmail and persecution. Therefore the Germans have a difficult task before them. Among their immediate surroundings much improvement is noticed. The City of Haifa has been regenerated by their influence, and is now one of the most attractive towns in Syria. Its streets are comparatively clean, its shops are well kept, its schools are sufficient for the education of the Moslem as well as the Christian population, and its inhabitants have a reputation among their neighbors for honest dealing that was not conceded before the Germans came.

Haifa might become a town of importance if the railroad to Damascus, which was started a few years

ago, could be completed. The concession was given to the Thames Iron Company of London, which had graded fifty-seven miles, with a splendid roadbed, bridges and culverts built of heavy masonry, and had laid six miles of track with seventy-pound rails, when the governor of the province stopped the work by order of the sultan and has not allowed it to be resumed. Recently, however, as related in another chapter, the franchise and property have been surrendered to the Government, which is expected to renew them to a German syndicate. This syndicate is expected to complete the road to Damascus, and improve the harbor, which will make Haifa as important a port as Beirut.

No Biblical interest attaches to Haifa. It is not mentioned in the Bible, and the only great historical events associated with the place occurred in the year 1100, when it was besieged and captured by Tancred, the Crusader, and in 1898, when it was visited by the German kaiser. The Turkish government took a great deal of trouble and spent a great deal of money to show its respect for Wilhelm II. and to make his journey in the Holy Land pleasant and profitable. It was a great thing for the country, too, and travelers this very day are enjoying noticeable advantages due entirely to his visit.

Before he came Palestine was almost entirely destitute of roads. Since the days of the Romans road building has been a lost art. In fact the Turks and the Arabs do not care anything about roads, any more than about boats, because they travel on the backs of animals and never use wheeled vehicles for any purpose. Therefore a camel track is good enough for them, and they are willing that foreigners should fol-



low their example without indulging in the luxury of carriages and wagons. Hence Palestine had probably the worst roads in the world. But when the emperor decided to visit the Holy Land the sultan employed a number of German engineers and under their direction set his army at work to build one hundred and twenty miles of macadamized roads to the points his fellow sovereign desired to reach. Most of them are in good condition to-day, although they have not been repaired since 1898, and under the heavy rains that occur in the winter are gradually washing out.

A new pier at Haifa was also built by the Turkish government, because the old one is awkward and dangerous for landing. Dr. Schumaker, the American consular agent, was the contractor, and made a good job of it. The pier is a solid mass of masonry and concrete and was intended to be immortal. It was never used but once, however, and that was when the emperor landed.

His reception by the German colonists was the greatest function ever held in Haifa. They made him speeches and presents, they sang the songs of the fatherland and little girls presented flowers to the empress and ladies of her suite. His majesty took a great interest in everything. He visited the schools and ordered a new outfit of furniture to be shipped from Berlin. He went to the soap factory and purchased enough of its products to wash all Germany. He visited the stables and the blacksmith shop, and was so pleased with everything, and particularly with the loyalty of the colonists, that he has since given an annual subsidy to each of the colonies of 4,000 marks. This manifestation of interest was very important to the welfare of the colonists, for it strengthened their



position with the Turkish government and impressed the officials with the propriety of respecting them. These officials understand the relations that exist between the sultan and the kaiser and appreciate the fact that Germany has for years been standing off the other European powers whenever they have threatened Turkey. The colonists have suffered a great deal of annoyance from the local officials and provincial authorities, who, like all Turks, are opposed to everything foreign and look upon infidels as their proper prey. In assessing and collecting taxes, in authorizing the sale of land and in various other official transactions they were formerly very extortionate and ugly, but since the emperor's visit they have been more reasonable.

The colonies are governed by a council elected by the members, which meets periodically at Jerusalem, where they own a large tract of land just outside the city walls and have a village of 400 or 500 people with fine buildings, neat streets, well-kept gardens and every evidence of German industry and thrift. There are a few Americans among them. The colony at Jaffa numbers 360, and that at Sarona, near Jaffa, 400. There are no Americans in the Jaffa colony and only a few at Sarona. The other colony in the valley of Rephaim numbers 420, with a few Americans. All the colonies are equally prosperous, especially in trade, and are increasing gradually by recruits from the United States, Germany and southern Russia.

Dr. Schumaker, the United States consular agent at Haifa, who is a topographical engineer and archeologist, has made a detailed survey of the country east of the Jordan and a topographical map of that section for the English and German Palestine societies. The

same organization has employed him to make excavations on the plain of Megiddo, where Barak and Deborah defeated the Canaanites, as related in the fourth chapter of Judges. Ahaziah, King of Judah, died there when wounded by Jehu; Josiah fought the Egyptian army and was defeated on this plain, and Solomon afterward erected extensive fortifications there to command the trails from Damascus southward.

The ancient city of Acre, which during the Crusades was one of the most famous and most talked of places in all the world, and where for two centuries the commerce of the sea and the products of the plains of Palestine met, lies across the bay from Haifa in a state of abject hopelessness and slumber. It has a population of about 6,000 people, mostly soldiers and Moslems, and is said to be more Turkish than any other town in Syria. The inhabitants are fiercely fanatical, even more so than in Arabia or other parts of Turkey, and during the feast of Ramazan, the holy week of the Mohammedans, it is not safe for Christians to go about the streets. A large part of them are there involuntarily, either as prisoners or members of the garrison.

The sultan uses the venerable fortresses of the Crusaders as prisons, and sends down from Constantinople and other parts of the Ottoman Empire for temporary or permanent detention in Acre people whom he does not trust. The hotels and boarding-houses are full of suspects, who can be easily watched by the soldiers, for there is no way of escape except by sea or across soul-chilling quicksands and pitfalls. The climate is not very healthful, owing to the miasma that rises from a neighboring marsh, but otherwise Acre is a comfortable place to live in. It is a question whether the soldiers are not more wretched than the prisoners they



guard, but fortunately they do not know it. Turks make good soldiers. They are easily susceptible to discipline, and the doctrine of fatalism makes them fierce fighters. Any man who is killed while defending the sultan or the doctrines of Islam goes straight to paradise on a through limited ticket.

The army is filled by conscription, but Christians are not impressed. This is because the sultan does not trust them, and not for any consideration of their faith or prejudices. Every Jew, Greek, Armenian, Maronite, Druse and other unbeliever of military age has to pay a tax amounting to about \$3 a year in lieu of military service, which ought to make him very happy; for, although under the law conscripts are not supposed to serve more than three years, a man who once gets into the Turkish army finds it difficult to get out.

You can sail across the bay from Haifa to Acre, six miles, or drive around nine miles upon a solid beach as good as those of Atlantic City or Cape May, except here and there are quicksands which change their location in a most mysterious manner and can only be detected by experienced eyes. Fringing the beach are groups of stately palms to admire, and wrecks are strewn upon the shore to excite wonder and curiosity. Acre used to have a harbor in the Crusader's period of its glory, and was visited by ships from all over the world, but now it is filled with sand and soil brought down from the mountains during the rainy season by the River Kishon. The insecurity of the roadstead is due to its hard stone bottom, which leaves an anchor nothing to cling to, and winter gales sweep across the headland of Mount Carmel with great force. There is no possibility of a ship beating out to sea, and if its anchor drags or gives way it must inevitably go ashore.



Upon this beach, according to Pliny, the art of glass-making was discovered by a party of Phoenician sailors. While cooking their dinner the sand melted into lumps of a vitreous appearance, which led to an investigation. There is no reason to doubt the story. It is as ancient as the town itself, and according to history the first glass factories were at the neighboring towns of Tyre and Sidon, while yet the Israelites were in Egypt. The town of Acre was of no importance then, but you will remember that Sidon was a considerable city while Jacob was working seven years for his wife.

Acre was the last refuge of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, and their fortifications stand to-day almost as they left them, with only the changes of natural decay. On the sea front is a stretch of wall which was battered to ruins and never rebuilt, and what was once the finest Christian church in the East is now a khan for stabling camels and entertaining traveling traders. It has a noble cloister supported by pillars of rare marbles and granite stolen by the knights templar from pagan temples, but nowadays their beauty is wasted upon camel drivers.

The fortifications seem very formidable, but they could not stand long against modern artillery. They are still equipped with nearly four hundred cannon, but most of them ought to go into an ordnance museum. Upon one of the largest guns, which is supposed to command the approach to the harbor, is the motto, "Ultima Ratio Regnum." It sounds as if the inscription were intended for satire.

Acre has no business or prosperity which does not depend upon its garrison or its prisoners, and most of the inhabitants make their living off one or the other. Some of the prisoners have a good deal of money, and

are allowed to spend it freely by paying liberal baksheesh to the officials and guards in charge of them. Martial law prevails within the walls, and the municipal regulations are framed upon military discipline. There is but one gate on the land side and one opens to the shipping in the harbor. Both are closed at sunset.

The most interesting prisoner at Acre at present is Abbas Effendi, a learned Persian prophet, who proclaims a new religion, and is the head of the sect known as Babies, or Babites, so called from the word Bab, which means a gate. The founder of the sect, a Persian of high rank, a member of the Seyid and a direct descendant of Mohammed, called himself "The Gate to God," hence the name of his followers. He was a Persian merchant, Mirza Ali Mohammed, born at Shiraz in 1820. In 1844 he claimed to have visions. His pretensions were very much like those of Mohammed, and he declared that through him alone could mankind receive the truth and reach heaven. With Husein, a moulah or priest of the Moslem church, from Bushru in the province of Khurasan, Persia, he retired to a monastery at Kerbela on the Euphrates, and there spent several years in fasting, meditation and study to prepare himself for a great duty to which he had been assigned.

Syria seems to be the birthplace of religions. Judaism, Christianity, Mohammedanism and innumerable other faiths have originated in its deserts. No great religious movement except Brahmanism and Buddhism originated elsewhere. Since the crucifixion innumerable messiahs and prophets have arisen and disappeared in this little country, and I have been asking all the wise men I have met why that should be what



there is in the atmosphere that develops prophets and teachers and fanatics? Why should they be bred in this monotonous desert life without distractions, and surrounded by the powerful idolaters of Egypt and Babylonia? Perhaps the solitude of the desert leads to reflection and the sunsets may excite the imagination, but as yet I have received no satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon.

The history of the Babite movement is similar to that of others. As soon as its leader began to make his influence felt and his disciples multiplied, the government persecuted them, and then of course he grew in strength and popularity. He went about the country preaching and teaching, and at his death Moulah Husein declared him to have been a divine being, and that only those who believed in him would be saved. Husein played the part of John the Baptist, and St. Peter combined and became the head of the sect. He was arrested, condemned and executed for heresy and sedition in 1850, but it only strengthened the movement, and his disciples increased rapidly in numbers, zeal and fanaticism. It became a religious war. A new leader, Moulah Mohammed Ali, appeared, took up headquarters at Bagdad, organized an army and attempted to force the new faith upon the government. Battles were fought, thousands of persons were massacred, and finally, in 1866, the Shah of Persia, finding his throne in danger, appealed to the Sultan of Turkey, who sent troops to his assistance.

The leaders of the movement were captured and sent to Adrianople, in European Turkey, where they were confined in the Turkish citadel, and soon began to quarrel among themselves, the sons of the Messiah and the descendants of the prophet Husein, each claiming



to be the head of the church. Beha, who seems to have been the ablest of them, was sent to the prison at Acre and Mirza was sent to Cyprus. In 1884 Mirza obtained permission from the authorities to send ambassadors to Acre to effect a reconciliation between the two factions, but his envoys were murdered by agents of Beha, and since then very little has been heard from the Cyprus branch.

Beha's following, however, continues to grow and now numbers several hundred thousand. Beha died in 1888 and his eldest son, Abbas Effendi, succeeded him as chief priest of the Babites. He is a clever, learned and respectable man, having a magnetic presence, attractive manners and a great deal of tact. Some years ago he sent disciples to America to carry the gospel of the Babites, who have met with considerable success. Their chief representative is a Mr. Chairall, who resides in New York and has translated into the English language and published a series of volumes setting forth the creed and principles of the new faith. Abbas claims to be a Christian. He worships God, accepts Christ, but claims himself to be the embodiment of the Holy Spirit, the third member of the God-head. The fundamental principle, as he explains it, is to love your fellow men and do good, but an ordinary mind like mine finds it impossible to follow the intricate reasoning by which he proves himself to be the gate to heaven.

Abbas Effendi is a fascinating mystic, a man of most impressive presence and conversation, and his voice is musical and mesmerizing. He seems to have a mercenary tendency, however, for he never lets an American leave him without an appeal for funds for the propagation of the faith.

He has been quite successful in that, as in other directions. Every year numbers of Americans come to see him and have brought him gifts of money, the most of which has been used in the construction of a shrine and temple upon Mount Carmel, above the town of Haifa, where Abbas Effendi intended to bury the remains of his father and establish the center of his church. As the movement is supposed to be secret the Turkish authorities became alarmed at the number of American visitors and their liberal contributions, so Abbas Effendi was prohibited from leaving Acre, and has not been able to complete the shrine. The walls are up, the roof is laid, and part of the interior finished. For the time being the Babite movement is in a position of arrested development, but Abbas Effendi is full of faith and confidence, and says that if his American supporters are loyal he expects soon to persuade the Turkish authorities to set him free to carry salvation to all the earth.

## XI

### From Mount Carmel to Nazareth





## XI

### FROM MOUNT CARMEL TO NAZARETH

The air was filled with the songs of birds when we were called one morning for a long ride to Nazareth. Nowhere do the birds sing so loudly and so lively as at Haifa, and their plumage is as bright as their songs. Everything in nature seems to be alive and happy. The gardens of the German colony are glowing with color, the fruit trees are masses of blossoms, and the vines are running over the walls as fast as Jonah's gourd. The hotel at Haifa is comfortable. It is kept by a member of the German colony, with his wife and sons and daughters to assist him in the frugal German way, and it is a grateful oasis for a traveler to find in the desert. But all the hotels in Palestine that are kept by Germans are good. They are clean and the food is plain but wholesome. You will not find the luxuries and conveniences that are offered in the large cities, of course, but you will not have to fight over your bills every time as you do in Italy and other parts of Turkey. Instead of trying to rob you these German landlords take a hospitable interest in your welfare and make you as comfortable as possible, and I think the wienerschnitzel and fried potatoes that we had when we arrived half famished after a long and tiresome ride, tasted better than anything I ever had at the Waldorf.

We hired some wagons that were made at Tioga, Penn., from another member of the German colony, who sent his son to drive and look after us, and we

were assured that the vehicle was the identical one that carried the German emperor through Palestine. A certain skeptic, who is not worthy of notice, declared that everybody who has come to Palestine since has ridden in that very carriage, and that eleven of them are for hire, but John, our faithful cicerone, expostulated sincerely and assured us that we only, out of the host of tourists, were allowed to use the emperor's chariot.

John is not handsome; he does not travel on his shape, and the cut and fit of his garments make it clear that he is not vain. He does not hang strings of beads around the necks of his horses to keep off the evil eye as the rest of the people do down in that country, and perhaps that is a drawback, but otherwise he is faithful, truthful, candid and enduring. We have seen a good deal of John under one circumstance and another, but never saw him angry or tired, and if you want to test the truthfulness of a driver, question him about distances. A Spaniard, a Frenchman, an Italian or an Arab, out of politeness, will make them short or long as they think will please you best, and then rely on their ingenuity to keep up the deception, but John and the Norwegians who drove us last summer are inexorably exact, and there was a degree of consolation in the feeling that John is a pessimist and always makes the distance longer than it really is. He has driven us many miles in Palestine over all sorts of roads, mostly bad ones, and never underestimated a distance. We always knew when he said it was four miles to the next destination, that it couldn't be more than two and a half, and he would still be a long distance off when we were actually at the gates. I take this opportunity to offer an humble tribute to John as a man



worthy of confidence in a land where such men are few, although he does insist that the Emperor of Germany rode in our carriage, or that we rode in his. I hope he will never become contaminated by contact with imaginative Arabs.

The one-eyed town crier, who takes the place of a morning newspaper at Haifa, was just starting out to announce the arrival of a steamer for Jaffa as we drove away from the hotel. Like Jehu, John plunged recklessly through the narrow streets, yelling and whistling to scare people out of the way, and cracking his whip as loud as the report of a revolver as he approached a turning place. The streets are very narrow, scarcely wide enough for a wagon; articles exposed for sale in front of the shops had a close shave, and the foot passengers we met squeezed up against the wall to let us pass by. But they did not seem to be indignant about it. They were probably used to having their shins scraped by the hub of a wheel. It is almost unavoidable in that country.

After leaving the town the road runs along the base of Mount Carmel beside the abandoned railway track of which I told you in a previous chapter. The tops of the walls were covered with flowering vines of purple, and a blanket of wild flowers seems to have been spread over the pastures and other unplowed ground. We found almost all of our field flowers there and several others that are unfamiliar, and the colors seem brighter than they do at home, although I presume that it is an illusion caused by the contrast with the naked rocks and dreary sands. But one thing is certain, wherever there is a patch of fertile soil in Palestine it may be depended upon to do its level best, like the chief end of man, to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

Caravans of camels came in close succession toward town loaded with firewood, and such firewood as an ordinary American would reject with indignation. Timber is scarce in those countries, and a tree is seldom chopped down. They trim off the dead limbs and use the prunings of the vines and the fruit orchards and hedges for fuel. Every little branch and twig is carefully laid away in the sun and wind to dry, and when they are thoroughly cured they are cut up into fagots, tied in bundles, piled on the back of a camel or an asino, and taken to town to be sold in the markets for firewood. Herds of goats with their udders distended were coming in to be milked, and droves of donkeys loaded with vegetables and freshly cut fodder, and one solitary yoke of cows hauling a wagon. Most of the heavy teaming about the towns is done upon enormous carts by yoked buffaloes. Building stone and other material of similar weight is hauled in that way, but you seldom see a yoke of cattle used for teaming upon the farms. They are yoked to plows in every direction. Few horses are used for plowing. The cattle are broken to the yoke at a very early age, when they are calves, and few farmers have carts. All their transportation is done upon the backs of donkeys and camels.

Women and men were working together in the fields planting and hoeing, setting out young trees, repairing irrigating ditches and doing other spring work, and, judging by appearances, the equality of the sexes is recognized in Palestine, as in other parts of the East, wherever there is any hard work to be done.

We followed the edge of the River Kishon, which was then quite well filled with water, but goes dry in the early summer. Like most of the rivers of Palestine it



goes to extremes. It is either a flood or a drought. Shepherds were bringing their flocks down from the sides of Mount Carmel to be watered, and they generally have to go a good ways for water. Some of them wore the Bedouin costumes, and nearly all the flocks were the property of Bedouins, who galloped around with hooded heads and flowing garments and guns across the pommels of their saddles, just as you see them in the pictures of Oriental life; but their horses are a disappointment, and in that respect the pictures we are familiar with are inaccurate. A good horse among the Bedouins of that part of the world is an exception. Whenever you see one it is not ridden by a Bedouin, but always by some gentleman from town.

The road is good. It was built for the emperor, and although it is out of repair in spots, will last for several years longer. We crossed the River Kishon by a splendid bridge of stone near where the prophets of Baal were brought down from Carmel to be slaughtered, and could see the spot where Elijah sent his servant seven times to look across the sea for signs of rain, and then entered upon the famous plain of Esdraelon, which has been called "The Battlefield of Palestine," the scene of more history than any other plain in the world, for upon it the greatest empires, faiths and races have contended for supremacy since the time of Saul's willfulness and superstition, and each has come to judgment.

It is possible that the battle in which the ark was taken and the sons of Eli killed was upon this same spot, but that is not definite. There is no doubt, however, that it was the scene of David's first great battle, where "the Philistines gathered together all their



armies to Aphek, and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel." You can find out all about it in the 28th chapter of 1 Samuel.

It was from there, too, that Saul went to see the witch of Endor, who lived in a wretched little town about four miles away. There are many caves in the hill-side, and one of them, of course, is pointed out as the actual residence of the witch, although no affidavit goes with the story. Near by Endor is the little village of Nain, rendered forever memorable and blessed because Jesus raised the widow's son from the dead. Nain was once a town of considerable importance, but is now little more than a shapeless mass of ruins, among which a few mud huts still stand.

You will remember that "the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons, and the Philistines slew Jonathan and Aminadab and Melchishua, Saul's sons," and Saul himself "was sore wounded of the archers" and commanded his armor bearer to kill him, but his armor bearer would not, "for he was sore afraid." Therefore, "Saul took a sword and fell upon it; and so Saul died, and his three sons, and his armor bearer and all his men, the same day together," and David lamented with this lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan, his son:

"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan," he sobbed; "very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women."

The battle between Barak and Sisera, directed by Deborah, the prophetess, occurred upon this same plain, and the description in the Bible is one of the noblest pen-pictures in all literature. Barak and Deborah, with their small body of devoted troops,

gathered on the summit of Mount Tabor, while the hosts of Sisera, with 900 iron chariots, were encamped near a little village called Taanach, which still exists and preserves its name. The prophetess, standing upon the summit of Tabor, gave the order for the battle before daylight, and Barak fell upon the sleeping hosts of the Canaanites without warning. "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera," the Bible says, "the rains descended, the winds blew, the floods came," and the 900 chariots and horsemen were driven in a terrible panic down into the narrow valley through which our carriage passed, trampling upon one another until "the River of Kishon swept them away; that ancient river, the River Kishon."

The famous plain of Esdraelon is a wide rent between the two ranges of mountains which run east and west across central Palestine. It has an uneven surface, undulating like great waves of the sea from the shores of the Mediterranean to the valley of the Jordan, and is widest where it reaches straight across without interruption from the hills of Galilee to those of Samaria. The eastern portion is known, for sake of distinction, as the plain of Megiddo; the central portion, near Nazareth, as the valley of Jezreel, and the whole as Esdraelon. The soil is surpassingly fertile, and nearly all the arable land is under cultivation. In the spring of the year the whole surface is a vivid green, being almost entirely sown to wheat, barley and millet. The uneven surfaces are covered with mulberry, fig and olive groves, which are full of tender leaves, and here and there are groups of palms and hedges of prickly pear, which add variety to the scene.

The slopes of the mountains and hills are dotted with villages, in which the farmers live, almost all of them



retaining their ancient names, and many are mentioned in the Scriptures. At various places ruins appear, sometimes a castle of the Crusaders, sometimes an ancient Roman settlement, which has fallen into decay and is partially buried. There are other sites where nothing but tombs remain to tell the story of an extinct civilization. The richness of the earth is due largely to the heavy rains which wash the particles of soil and the disintegrating rocks from the mountains, but, curiously enough, in that great area there is no running stream and scarcely a trace of water.

Across this plain for 4,000 years was the great trail of the nations, and it naturally became the arena of war between the lowlanders, who trusted in their chariots, the Ishmaelites, who fought from the saddle, and the Israelite highlanders of the surrounding mountains. Its fame as a battlefield suggested to St. John its adoption in the Apocalypse as an illustration of the scene of the final struggle between the hosts of good and evil—"the place which is called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon, that is, the Valley of Megiddo."

We stopped to lunch on the top of a ridge in a grove of ancient oaks, surrounded by water-worn rocks, which cropped out of a soil that was carpeted with moss and flowers, and the sunny sides of all the little mounds were blazing with the most beautiful anemones of intense scarlet, which at first we took for poppies. From where we sat we could see a group of black tents of the Bedouins standing upon the site where Jael drove a tent peg into the brain of Sisera, when he fled into the mountains after the battle with Barak. Upon the plain to the east of us occurred the victory of Gideon over "the Midianites, the Amalekites and the Children of the East," who came from the desert



and encamped upon the cultivated fields of Israel as told in the sixth chapter of Judges. "For they came up with their cattle and their tents and they came as grasshoppers for multitudes, for both they and their camels were without number, and they entered into the land to destroy it, and Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites, and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord." And Gideon made a splendid fight and drove them back into the valley.

Two more battles hardly less bloody and equally important occurred upon the same field in Biblical times, one of them fatal to the kingdom of Israel and the other to the kingdom of Judea. It was in the last days of the Jewish monarchy that Palestine became the contested ground between the Pharaohs of Egypt and the emperors of Babylon. But perhaps the greatest fight, the most bloody and disastrous of all, speaking from the standpoint of Christianity, was that which took place in the Middle Ages between the Crusaders and Saladin. It was the last struggle of the Christian invaders, and they staked everything in the presence of the holiest scenes in all history, those which are sanctified more than any other by the ministry of our Lord. Then we come down to 1799, when Napoleon Bonaparte, having abandoned his monstrous idea of forming an empire on the banks of the Euphrates, fell back upon the first great retreat of his career, followed by the black tents of the Bedouins. He had obtained temporary possession of the country around Nazareth and had started toward the seacoast, when on Esdraelon he was overtaken by a Turkish force of over 25,000 men and whipped them with less than one-tenth of that number. After the retirement of the French from Acre the Turkish commander threatened to mas-

sacre all the Christians in the country, but was prevented from executing his bloody purpose by the energetic protests of Sir Sydney Smith, the English admiral, who had assisted in driving out Bonaparte.

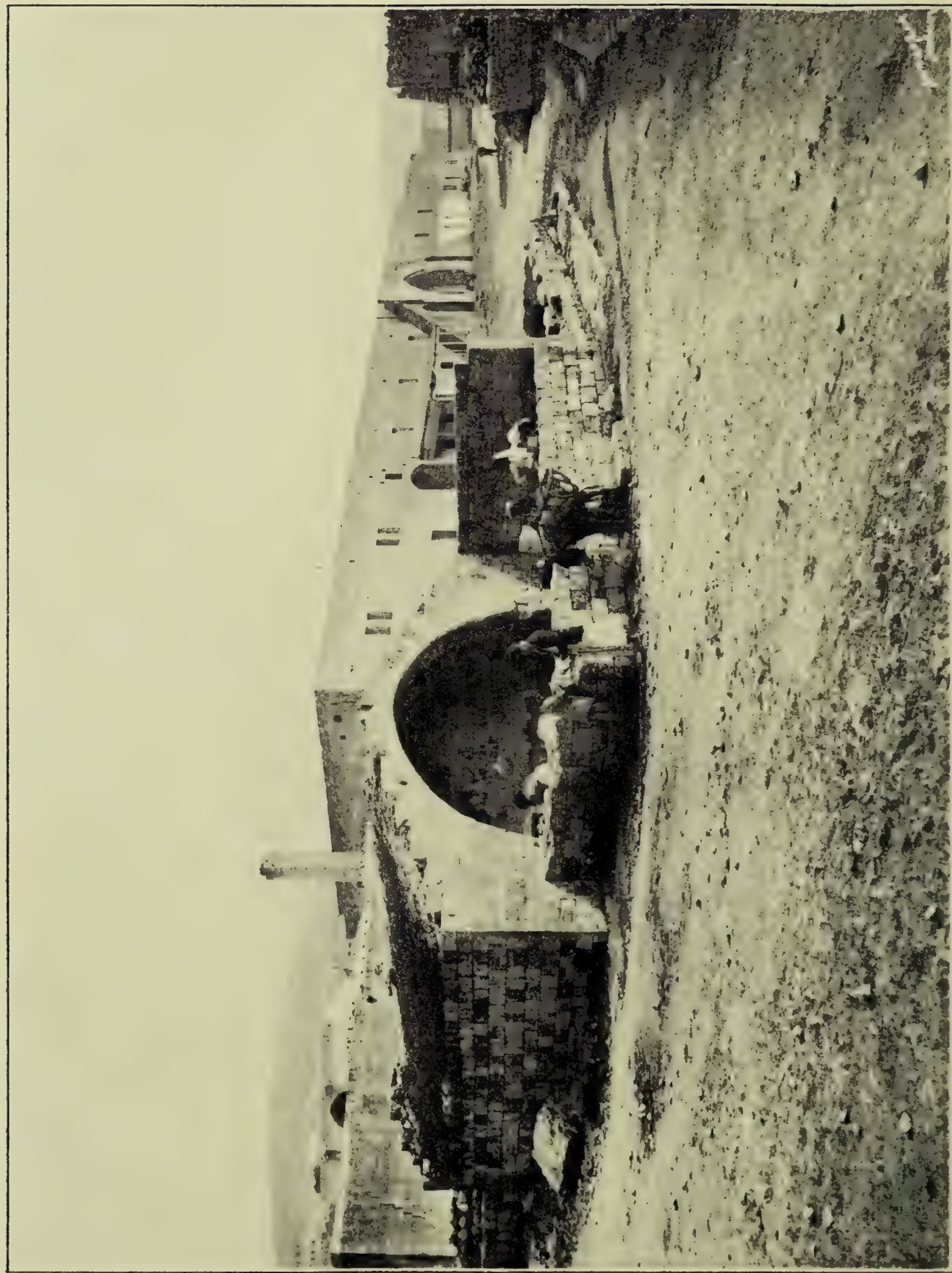
Of all the numerous villages upon the slopes of the mountains that enclose this historic plain none has more tragic association than Zerin, a little hamlet of mud houses, which stands upon the site of the ancient City of Jezreel, which Ahab chose for his royal residence. His father's capital at Samaria was not abandoned. It was the chief seat of the dynasty for several reigns, but Queen Jezebel preferred another place for some reason, and there she met her fate.

Standing upon the edge of the little eminence where we took our lunch, we could see up the valley toward Naboth's vineyard, and looking down the westward within easy view are the stones that were stained with the blood of Jezebel when she was trampled under the hoofs of Jehu's horses, and the dogs now prowl around the wretched village as they did through the splendid streets of Jezreel on the day that they ate the body of the murdered queen.

We were overtaken by a hailstorm when we were crossing a low place in the valley, and the hailstones fell like bullets upon the top of the carriage. They were as large as cherries, but in a moment the storm was over and the sun came out as warm and bright as could be. We passed the ruins of a Crusader's castle, the first settlement of German Knights Templar in Palestine, and, climbing a long hill, passed a village which is said to have been the home of Zebidee and the birthplace of James and John, the apostles. It was a hard pull climbing the last divide that separates the slopes of the Mediterranean from the valley of the







THE WELL OF NAZARETH.

Jordan, and we had to get out and walk to ease the horses.

The Arab villages are more frequent as we approach Nazareth, for few of the people live on their farms. The Arabs who occupy the ruined sites and cultivate the soil and pay taxes like other citizens are held in contempt by their nomadic brethren of the desert. The true Bedouin still lives in a tent and rejects the duties and vocations of civilization. He will follow a herd of cattle or horses; he will breed sheep, shear them and sell the wool; he will milk cows and goats and make cheese, but he will not till the soil or do any manual labor in the way of farming. Nor will he allow his children to intermarry with the degenerate families who have chosen to gain their living by honest industry.

We cross the ridge upon a splendid piece of road, one of the best we have seen in Palestine, and after following its curves around the contour of the hills, we come in sight of a holy spot, the scene that every Christian in all the world most desires to witness, the place in which Jesus lived for nearly thirty years; where He spent His childhood and boyhood, and grew in strength and favor until He acquired the wisdom and the grace which changed the world. Nazareth lies upon the side of a stony slope surrounded by fifteen hills, which have been compared to a shell, to guard it from intrusion. Its white houses are separated by clumps of green fig trees, small gardens, hedges of prickly pear, and little fruit orchards, which grow with wondrous fertility from a soil that looks almost barren. The modern name of the town is En-Nasira, and although not a single artificial object within sight existed during the lifetime of the Saviour, we know that



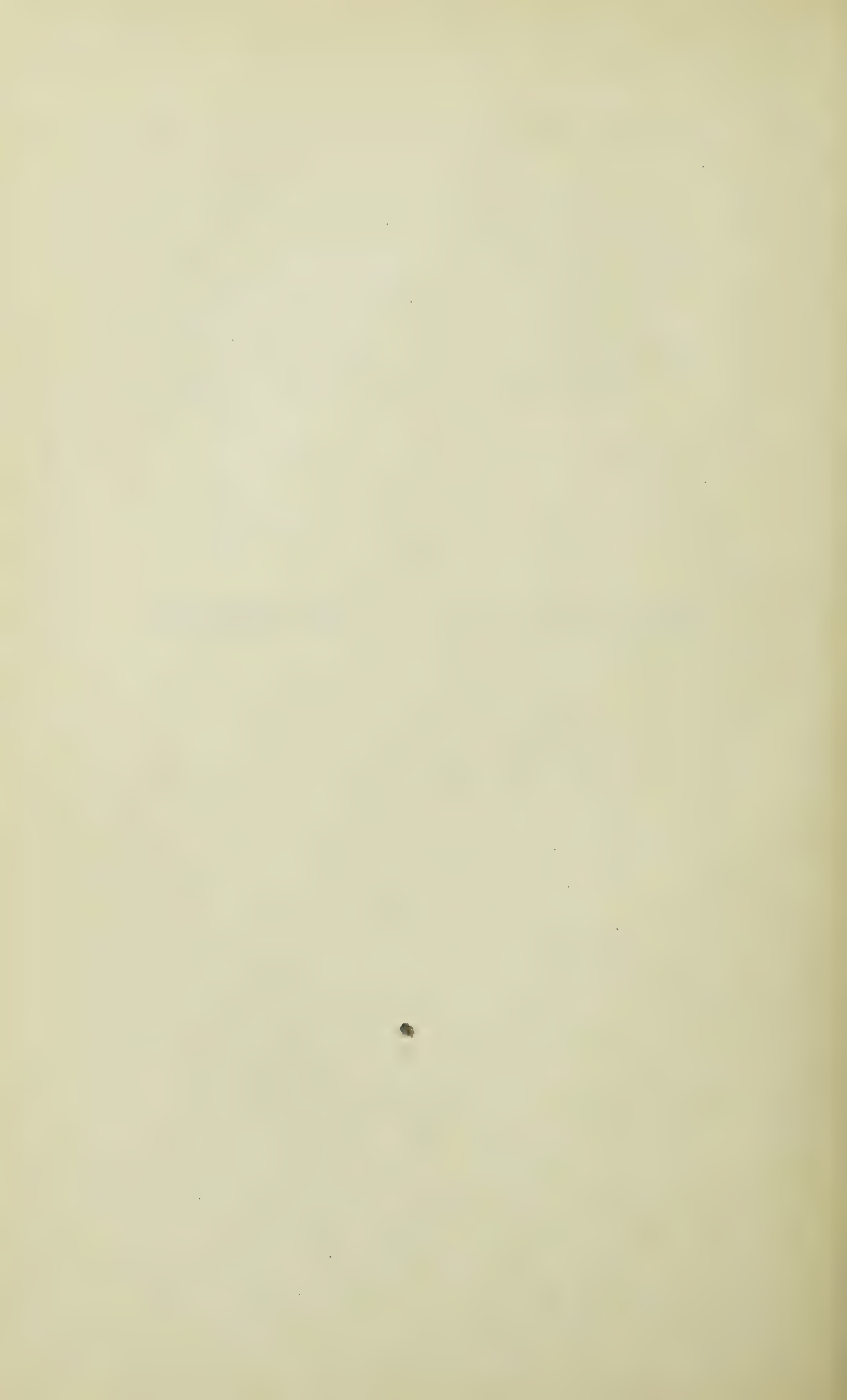
## 236 TO-DAY IN SYRIA AND PALESTINE

every rock in the mountains, every gorge, every sunny slope and every fertile field were familiar to His eyes. The landscape is absolutely the same, even to the pathways which cross the goat pastures and divide them like a checker board. As a lad Jesus may Himself have herded sheep and goats among these very hills, and His hands may have plucked the wild flowers that brighten the landscape in every direction.



XII

The Early Home of Our Saviour



## XII

### AT THE HOME OF OUR SAVIOUR

It calls for a faith sufficient to move mountains to believe in all the sacred sites one is shown at Nazareth and the stories that are told by the pious men in charge of them. They give details that are not only unnecessary, but which none save simpletons or fanatics can accept. They show you a rock upon which the Virgin Mother used to sit while she gossiped and discussed domestic affairs with her neighbors; they point out the exact spot upon which she was sitting when the Angel of the Annunciation appeared to her, and the paths in which she used to walk leading the child Jesus by the hand. They take you to the workshop in which Jesus assisted His father with carpenter's tools, and a friend insists that he was shown an old earthen jar in which the Virgin carried water from the well, but the monks did not go so far with me.

The points of greatest interest in Nazareth are a cavern over which Joseph and Mary lived when Jesus was a child; the synagogue in which Christ taught; a stone upon which He dined with His disciples both before and after the resurrection; the Mount of the Precipitation, from which the people threatened to "cast Him down the cliff," and a spring at which Mary received the startling announcement from the angel. All of these places are problematical and located by guesswork, some of them accurately perhaps, but nobody knows, for there is not the slightest tangible



evidence that any of them were consecrated by actual association with the Redeemer of Men.

There is a great difference among the monks who have charge of the holy places and their stories sometimes vary according to the credulity of their listeners. A young Frenchman who showed us around the Church of the Annunciation was a fanatic, bursting with zeal, faith and piety, who evidently believed everything he said and desired us to believe it also, but another Franciscan brother, an American, older, wiser and more thoughtful, who kindly accompanied us through the village, was less positive and more rational in his explanations. He qualified all his statements and gave us the facts as near as it was possible to relate them. He did not repudiate the claims of the Greek monks to certain sacred sites, as the Franciscans usually do, but summed up in an intelligent and judicial manner the evidence concerning them. When he took us to the Greek Church, which has been erected over Mary's well, which the Greeks declare was the scene of the annunciation, he was welcomed with cordiality by the Russian priests, who showed none of the animosity that had been apparent toward the Roman Catholics elsewhere.

The good brother told us that there is no testimony either in the scriptures or in secular history to establish the authenticity of anything in Nazareth, but the fathers of the church, taking sacred and secular history and traditions into consideration, have located the scenes identified with the early life of the Saviour as intelligently and conscientiously as possible. With the exception of the single visit to Jerusalem when Jesus was twelve years old there is not one authentic anecdote of His life during all those thirty years pre-

vious to His public ministry. Nothing of ancient Nazareth remains that can be identified, he said, and it is only a matter of conjecture that the town stands upon the site that it occupied twenty centuries ago. This conjecture is based upon the fact that the single spring which furnishes water to the entire population must be the same that served the purpose in the days of the Saviour, and the town must have been built around it then as now. The houses are of mud and a soft rock which disintegrates rapidly in the heavy rains that prevail at certain seasons in that climate. Walls of this stone will not last as long as lumber. And furthermore, the entire hamlet has been destroyed and forsaken at least three times during the Christian era, so that it is practically certain that every stone that stood in the village at the Saviour's day long ago crumbled to dust and was blown away to enrich the soil of the plain of Esdraelon.

The Church of the Annunciation, which marks the spot which the Roman Catholics believe to have been the scene of the interview between the Holy Virgin and the angel Gabriel, is built upon the ruins of a very ancient building. You are led down a flight of fifteen marble steps to a cave beneath the high altar. They call it the Chapel of the Angel; you then pass through a natural arch in the rock into a second cave, encased in marble and hung with silver lamps, which is known as the Chapel of the Annunciation. A marble slab in front of the altar, worn concave by the kisses of pilgrims, is supposed to mark the spot upon which the angel stood, and near it is a marble column miraculously suspended from the roof over the place where Mary sat. From this room we were conducted up several steps hewn in the rock to a dark room called



the "Kitchen of the Virgin," which looks as if it might have been a cistern. If you will read the passages in the gospels which relate the story you will realize how much is taken for granted.

The actual house which stood upon this spot, and in which the Virgin lived, was carried bodily by angels to a city in Herzegovinia in the Middle Ages, and remained there for several years on a promontory overlooking the Adriatic Sea. It was rescued a second time from invading Moslems by similar agencies and transported to the village of Loretto, in Italy, where it now stands beneath the sheltering walls of the magnificent Church of Our Lady of Loretto, and is visited annually by thousands of pilgrims. It shakes the faith of those who would like to believe when they discover that the Santa Casa, or holy house, is built of stone entirely unlike any that was ever seen in Nazareth or that section of Palestine. It is thirty-six feet long by seventeen feet wide and divided into four rooms. At present it is incased in marble richly adorned with bas-reliefs and other carvings illustrating the history of the Virgin. When I asked the young monk to explain the extraordinary circumstances under which this roughly made stone house was transported to Italy he did so without the slightest hesitation; but the older brother shrugged his shoulders and replied, "We believe what we believe. It is not for me to doubt the sacred traditions."

The orthodox Greeks contend that the annunciation occurred at a spring, where the women of Nazareth were in the habit of going for water, and hence they have built a church over the site, the shrine to which all the paths of Russian pilgrims lead. The church is small and the exterior is plain, but the interior is



brilliantly decorated, the walls are covered with votive offerings, ever-burning lamps of silver and gold hang from the ceiling, and service there is almost perpetual. The spring itself is covered with flagstones, a little hole being left, through which the priest lifts the water in a ladle and gives it to the pilgrims to drink. From this spot the surplus water flows through an aqueduct to a fountain known as Mary's Well, where the women of the town go twice a day, as they have done for 2,000 years or more, bearing upon their heads jars in which they carry their daily supply of water.

In the olden times they used earthen jars of artistic shape, which added much to the picturesqueness of the scene, but of recent years they have taken to using empty petroleum cans, which are much lighter and hold a good deal more, but are not at all graceful or romantic. Like all the women who are in the habit of carrying burdens upon their heads, these Nazarenes have a stately carriage that would become a queen. The women of the town have a wide reputation for beauty, although they might be more fairly entitled to it if they were a little neater about their persons; if their garments were washed more frequently and were not so ragged, and their hair so matted and unkempt. They have bright eyes, warm complexions, regular features, ruddy lips and coquettish manners. Their turbans and scanty garments are of gay colors; brass and silver bracelets are worn around their wrists and ankles, some of them with bells attached, which tinkle as they walk. They wear head-dresses of elaborate design and workmanship, loaded with coins, which are their dowry. A Nazarene girl, instead of going to a savings bank, hangs her money to her headdress, which

she wears on festive occasions, so that her suitors may know the amount of her dot.

Some of these girls have shapely figures and seem to be conscious of it, for they like to pose before kodaks, and never fail to beg for baksheesh as compensation. They might be cleaner, perhaps, if water were more plentiful, but every drop that is used for any purpose in the town has to be carried from that one fountain. Some of the women are tattooed upon the cheeks and chin, and others blacken their eyelids and eyebrows and prolong the eye by the application of a pencil, so as to make it almond shape. This imparts a peculiar brilliancy to the eye and a languishing, sensuous expression to the countenance. The practice is very ancient. It was in use among the Israelites before the return from Egypt and among the early Egyptians, as we know from the fact that the powder and brushes are almost invariably found in the ancient tombs. The powder, which is called kohl, is made by burning almond shells.

As this is the only source of water-supply ancient or modern Nazareth has ever had, it may be assumed without a doubt that the mother of our Lord came here daily with the other women of the place and often may have led the infant Jesus by the hand. Here, too, Christ may have sat with the other young men of the village, as is the custom now after the day's work is over, to exchange compliments and greetings with the neighbors. This custom is very old. Mary's Well has been the common resort of the people of Nazareth as long as the town has existed. The schoolboys play in the square around it as we have seen them to-day, leaving their bundles of books upon a wall near by. They are bright-looking boys, and, although they are



Moslems, Greeks and Roman Catholics, a large number of them attend the Protestant schools. You are disappointed at their lack of self-respect and manliness, for, whenever they see a stranger or a tourist, they drop their playthings and come clambering for baksheesh like a lot of beggars.

The alleged workshop of Joseph, for which there is not the slightest evidence of authenticity, is in the Moslem quarter of the town, and the Roman Catholics have built a chapel over it. They also have a chapel over a great block of hard chalk,  $11\frac{1}{2}$  by  $9\frac{1}{2}$  feet, upon which Christ is said to have dined with his disciples both before and after the crucifixion, but the chapel is modern and the rock was unknown in the seventeenth century, and there is nothing in the Scriptures or the traditions upon which to justify a belief that He met and dined with His disciples in Nazareth at any time. The synagogue in which Christ is said to have taught may be genuine. Its existence may be easily traced as far back as the fifth century.

There is and always has been an active controversy about what is called the Rock of Precipitation. Both the Greeks and Roman Catholics have their own sites, the latter being the most probable. The New Testament says that the infuriated inhabitants of Nazareth cast Him out of the city and brought Him to "a brow of the mountain," upon which the city was built, so as to cast Him down the cliff, and the site claimed by the Roman Catholics is much more reasonable, although not so picturesque as that of the Greeks.

Nazareth claims 10,000 population and may have that number when its hospices are filled with pilgrims and its hospitals with patients, but there has never



been a census, and the best advised authorities do not allow more than 4,500, of whom about half are Moslems and the remainder orthodox Greeks, Roman Catholics and Maronites, with about 250 Protestants. There are no Jews in Nazareth. They are not allowed to live there. They are permitted to come in daily and trade, but no Jew can rent a house or store or take up a permanent residence for fear of a public demonstration. They come and go, however, like other merchants, buying and selling, minding their own business and making money out of the Christians.

Brother Lazarus, our cordial American Franciscan monk, says that he never personally knew of a Jew being converted to Christianity. There may have been cases outside of his personal knowledge, but none within his own experience. "God, in His inscrutable wisdom," he said, "has hardened the hearts of the Jews against their own salvation."

He says that he has prayed for them every day for twenty years, and particularly for certain people of Jewish birth who are friends, but his prayers are not answered. It may be, he sometimes thinks, that the Jewish race is condemned to eternal perdition, but the Saviour forgave them upon the cross and asked His Father to forgive them "because they know not what they do."

Nazareth could not be a larger place than it is. Its position is not favorable for trade, and the scarcity of water is a permanent drawback. On one spring the entire population, men and beasts, are dependent. There is no other water for miles around, and there is no tradition of any other spring in the neighborhood. The inhabitants are still noted for their turbulent disposition. They bear the same evil reputation that

they have always borne. It sticks to them still, and if a redeemer should emerge from that town to-day the same question would be asked: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" The word Nazarene has always carried with it a degree of disgrace and contempt, and ever since the time of Jesus has been applied by the Jews to Him and to His followers. The Jews of Samaria and other parts of Galilee always refer to Christians as Nazarenes, and the term is often used by the Jews of Jerusalem.

Nazareth is a place that has no history. It is not mentioned in the Old Testament, and during the subsequent centuries it has remained hidden away in a narrow valley, an obscure village, of no political importance, the scene of no events and a place to be avoided, because of the evil reputation of its inhabitants. After the capture of Jerusalem by the Crusaders, Godfrey de Bouillon administered the government with justice and ability, and his name is still cherished. Prompted by reverence for the associations of the place, he endeavored to do something to improve Nazareth and advance the condition of the province. He erected churches and monasteries, both in Nazareth and upon Mount Tabor, but these favors ended with his death, and Nazareth sank into obscurity again. During the wars that have been so fiercely waged in Galilee it has been again and again sacked and destroyed, but its destruction was not of sufficient importance to be mentioned in history. Godfrey de Bouillon was the most admirable of all the Crusaders, not excepting Richard of the Lion Heart. He was no mere swashbuckler, but a man of ability, courage and conscience, and although cruel deeds are charged to his account he never engaged in plunder, he never dis-



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graced his profession and treated his captives with mercy.

The orthodox Greeks have a bishop at Nazareth and a large educational and ecclesiastical establishment, including a church dedicated to the Angel Gabriel, a monastery, a normal school for the education of native teachers, schools for both boys and girls and a hospice and hospital for their pilgrims. The Roman Catholics have a Franciscan monastery with a church and school, a large hospice, a school for Moslem boys exclusively, an orphanage, a hospital, a school kept by a religious order of rich devotees known as the Dames de Nazareth, a nunnery of the Clarisses, a nunnery and orphanage of the Sisters of St. Joseph, and a home for women members of different religious orders who come to Nazareth on pilgrimages. The Franciscans have forty monks in their monastery and sixty sisters in their convent. Seven young men, novices from the new Franciscan monastery at Washington, arrived a few days before me to spend a year in that sacred atmosphere. The monks would not let me see them because they were in retreat. The Protestants of Scotland have a medical mission, a church and a school. The English Female Educational Society has a handsome institution for the education of orphans and the British Bible Society has a large depot for the distribution of the Holy Scriptures.

There is a rather anomalous situation here, but the same may also be found in other parts of this country. Foreign Protestants are maintaining schools, hospitals and other charitable institutions for the education and relief of the children and the poor of the orthodox Greek church, which has even more extensive institutions of its own in the same towns, and is by far the



richest corporation in Palestine. It owns immense tracts of land and many valuable buildings, and makes large sums of money entertaining pilgrims. There is scarcely a member of the orthodox Greek church in Nazareth who does not in some manner or another derive the greater part of his revenue from pilgrims and tourists, and yet they do not hesitate to let the English and American missionaries take care of their poor and pay for the education of their children. This is explained by several reasons, the most important of which is that the Protestant schools and charitable institutions are the best, while those of the Greeks are the poorest and most unattractive. Therefore a Greek will allow the Protestants to pay for the education of his own children while he pays for the education of Moslem children in schools maintained by his own church. The natural result is that most of the pupils in the Protestant schools and most of the converts to Protestantism are from the orthodox Greek families.

From the crest of the hill back of Nazareth is one of the most striking and beautiful views in Palestine. Mount Tabor uplifts a rounded dome toward the southeast; the snow-clad summit of Mount Hermon is distinctly visible in the distant north, while Carmel lies to the westward like a sleeping monster, with its nose in the Mediterranean. These are three of the most famous mountains in the world. On the west, inclosed by a group of lower hills, lies the town of Sepphorieh, which is supposed to have been the residence of Joachim and Anna, the parents of the Holy Virgin, and of Zacharias and his wife, Elizabeth, the parents of John the Baptist, to whom Mary made a visit after the annunciation. This, however, like most of the stories you hear, is mere tradition.

The Mount of the Beatitudes, supposed to have been the scene of the Sermon on the Mount, is in the same direction, being one of the foothills of the Karn Hattin, a rocky peak nearly 1,200 feet high. Its situation and surroundings so strikingly coincide with the gospel narrative of the Sermon on the Mount and the place where the five thousand were fed with loaves and fishes as to absolutely disarm criticism, although of course the evidence in its favor would not stand for a moment under the rules of a court. It is the only place in the neighborhood that could have been used for such a purpose. The plain on which it stands is easily accessible. Its situation is central both to the peasants of the hills and to the fishermen of the lake, between which it stands, and it would be a natural resort for Jesus and His disciples from any one of the many towns and villages around it, for consultation or reflection, while there is a natural platform and amphitheater which corresponds precisely to the "level place" referred to by the evangelists. It is a singular coincidence that both the Greeks and Roman Catholics agree upon it without question.

By some freak of the fates the Mount of the Beatitudes, the spot upon which Christ preached words of peace and love and charity that will live longer than any others ever uttered by man, was the scene of one of the bloodiest battles of the Crusades on the 3d and 4th of July, 1187. Saladin, the brilliant leader of the Saracens, dealt a death blow to the power of the Franks in Palestine. Guy de Lusignan, King of Jerusalem, was taken prisoner with many Knights Templar and Hospitallers, who were sold to the Bedouins for slaves. The grand master of the Knights Templar was executed by Saladin's own hands. Because he



had so frequently broken faith the Saracen chieftain pronounced him unfit to live. From that day and from this place the decay of the Crusaders began, and it is no wonder, for anybody who reads the history of that extraordinary movement must boil with indignation at the crimes and cruelties that were perpetrated in the name of Christ. The motives of the Crusaders may have been pure and pious, but their methods were those of Satan. At the storming of Jerusalem they slaughtered 70,000 Moslems, regardless of age or sex. They burned thousands of Jews alive in synagogues and threw Jewish infants over the walls of the city upon the rocks of the valley of Jehoshaphat. After they had washed the blood from their hands, they knelt at the grave of Christ in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and returned thanks to the Prince of Peace for the victory they had won in His name. At Acre the feast of the assumption of the blessed Virgin was celebrated by hanging 2,700 hostages, innocent people who had been detained temporarily until their ransom could be paid, and, when an explanation was demanded by the heathen, the leaders of the Crusade declared that the act was "to vindicate the Christian religion and to retaliate, with the assent of divine grace, upon those who had destroyed so many Christians in battle with missiles from bows and arbalests."

Jesus as a boy no doubt often played upon the slopes of the hill from which He afterward delivered His famous sermon and among its beautiful surroundings studied the problems of life. From the summit of the hill back of Nazareth, which He no doubt often ascended, can be seen the great highway between Damascus and Egypt, over which have passed processions of pilgrims, caravans of trade and chariots of



war for forty centuries. It was used in Christ's time as it is used now. During the long evenings of summer it is customary for the people of Nazareth to stroll up its slopes to breathe a cooler and fresher atmosphere than that of the hollow in which the village lies.

The streets of Nazareth are narrow and dirty, but not so dirty as those of Jerusalem or Tiberius. There are no sewers or garbage collectors, hence everything has to be thrown into the streets in the Moslem quarter, but the new section of the town, among the monasteries and hospices, is well kept. The city has been razed to the ground and entirely obliterated several times during the last 1,900 years. Nothing that now stands is older than the seventeenth century, and during the last few years there has been considerable improvement. Nazareth is now a much larger and more important place than it ever was before, and is probably more prosperous than at any previous time in its history, because of the large sums of money expended by the religious brotherhoods in building monasteries, hospices, hospitals and entertaining pilgrims and tourists. A new hospice now being erected by the Russian government alone represents an expenditure of \$150,000, and the Greek church has expended several hundred thousands of dollars there during the last few years. Most of the pilgrims who come there are Russians. They number between 50,000 and 60,000 annually. They are taken care of in great hospices in charge of the monks of the Greek church. There are different grades of accommodation. The poor are allowed to sleep on the floor without bedding or blankets free of charge and are given a bowl of thick soup twice a day. Those who are a little better off are furnished bunks in large rooms similar to the emigrant

quarters of a steamship, while the richer ones are allowed rooms quite as good as can be obtained at a hotel. There is a hospital at which Russian pilgrims who become ill are cared for free of cost, and, strangely enough, many come there in the last stages of illness. They beg money from their friends and relatives to pay the expense of the journey in order that they may die and be buried in that holy place. That accounts for the large cemeteries that surround Nazareth, which are sufficient for a city ten times its size.

The Roman Catholic pilgrims are taken care of by the Franciscan monks and other brotherhoods, who have large buildings similar to those I have described. Everything is for the pilgrims. To house, feed and provide for them is the work of the entire population. The French hospice is larger and more attractive than the Russian. It was erected with a subsidy granted by the government of France for the accommodation of Roman Catholic pilgrims from that country. There are several religious houses under the care of the Roman Catholics with hospitals, schools and other institutions. Altogether about 3,000 strangers can be comfortably taken care of in Nazareth to-day. Ordinary travelers find a very good hotel, plain and unpretentious, but well kept by a German landlord.





**XIII**  
**Around the Sea of Galilee**



### XIII

#### AROUND THE SEA OF GALILEE

The descent from Nazareth to the Sea of Galilee is very rapid. That village lies at an altitude of about 1,100 feet above the Mediterranean, and the hills around it are from 2,000 to 4,000 feet high, while the sacred lake is 680 feet below tide water. Few people realize that the greater part of our Lord's ministry was performed in a torrid trench washed out by the River Jordan at some remote period of geological history. It is a curious formation of nature.

As the carriage descended along the rough road, which in wet weather is almost impassable, we passed from spring to summer. Travelers who visit the Sea of Galilee later than April must expect oppressive heat, and the contrast between the heavy and humid atmosphere of the lake basin and the pure and exhilarating ozone of the hill country around Nazareth is keenly felt by people who are sensitive to climatic changes. The vegetation becomes tropical as you approach the water. Trees which are never seen on the hills grow in thick jungles and groups of palms decorate the scene in every direction. The lake has the shape of a heart, thirteen miles long and eight miles wide. A Jewish rabbi once said: "Jehovah hath created many lakes, but the Sea of Gennersaret is his delight." It resembles the lochs of Scotland, and its resemblance to the lakes of northern Italy is often pointed out, although the foliage is more scanty and by no means so beautiful, and the villas and towns around them cannot be compared for a moment.



The lake is encircled by a white strip of beach. At the northern end it is formed of smooth white sand, shells and pebbles, and the southern end of gravel and black and white boulders. Evidences of volcanic agencies appear frequently, and on the southern banks are the famous hot baths of Herod, who utilized a group of sulphurous springs and built and fitted up in great luxury, in imitation of the Romans, a collection of bath houses that have never been surpassed in the East. The water of the springs has a bitter and nauseous taste, and smells like antiquated eggs, but amid all the wrecks of fortune with which the locality is strewn they still minister to the ills of humanity with great relief. Rheumatism, gout and other diseases can be cured by using them, and invalids come there from all parts of Syria. The springs were famous throughout the ancient world, but the present accommodations cannot be recommended. The bath houses are dirty and inconvenient, and the surroundings are repulsive. There is a Protestant hospital and a missionary medical station near by, both of which are supported by the Free Church of Scotland, and furnish neat but limited quarters.

The baths were called Hammath in the Old Testament, and are known as Hammon now. The springs are four in number. The water has a normal temperature of 144 degrees Fahrenheit, and its chief properties, as shown by analysis, are carbonate of lime, muriatic salts and chloride of magnesium. There is a cave in the hill upon which an old castle stands, which is supposed to be connected by subterranean passages with the springs, for it has a high temperature and is continually filled with steam. Persons afflicted with gout or rheumatism receive almost immediate relief by

sitting in this cave and submitting to the continuous and profuse perspiration which its high temperature excites.

Down in this pit, in the days of the Crusaders, the ambition of Christendom was scorched to the heart. Tempted by treachery, the Knights of the Cross attacked Saladin. The dust and heat were intense, for there had been a long drought and the earth was parched. The Arabs set fire to the trees and shrubbery. The knights choked in their armor. The foot soldiers, blinded by smoke and dust, were trampled down by the Bedouins. Although they fought sun, fire, heat and sword with terrible desperation, their defeat was utter. The entire force was annihilated, and nearly every man who escaped death was captured and taken into the desert as a slave.

Above the beach, around the lake, is a succession of grassy slopes and rocky cliffs with groups of oleanders, whose blossoms are more brilliant than can be found elsewhere. At the head of the lake the entrance to the River Jordan is marked by a rich green plain. The river comes down through rocky gorges with a succession of foaming rapids, passes through a jungle of luxuriant oleanders and then bursts into the clear waters of Galilee. A group of five palms and a clump of thorn trees mark its mouth. On the south, where the Jordan leaves the lake, it enters a muddy plain and silently cuts its way through the banks, gathering clay and other earth in solution until it becomes very turbid. Upon the eastern side of the lake the desert sands come almost to the water. Vegetation and fertility is found almost exclusively upon the western side, and it has always been so. It is believed that the soil of the eastern shores is just as rich and might



be as easily irrigated, but through all the centuries, and until recently, it has been exposed to the forays of the Bedouins, who do not hesitate to harvest other men's fields. At present there are no farms and few houses and the only lights to be seen are the camp fires of the Bedouins.

The most sacred section of the lake, and to one of religious sentiment a region invested with unparalleled interest, is the northwestern shore, where our Lord dwelt with men, where He preached from a ship, walked on the waves, slept in the storm, rebuked the winds, calmed the sea, performed the miracles of the fishes, cast out devils, and preached the gospel of love and peace for three years. These shores, however, are desolate now. Of all the numerous cities and towns in what must have been in His day the most thickly peopled district of Palestine, but one town—Tiberius—remains, and a collection of a few hovels called Mejdel, which is supposed to have been the ancient Magdala, the home of Mary the Magdalene. Josephus, who governed this province thirty-four years after the crucifixion, tells us that there were nine cities on the lake in his time, but they have all disappeared and few of their sites can be identified. In some part of this desolated region the home of Christ was situated, but there is nothing to enable us to establish its location with confidence. It would seem as if the curse He pronounced upon Capernaum had been literally fulfilled, and as if "it had been more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for Capernaum."

There has been more discussion upon this than over the site of any other of the sacred places, and the Palestine Exploration Society has shown a good deal of



interest and zeal in making excavations to determine the question. The only tangible evidence one way or the other is furnished by the alleged ruin of a synagogue which was built at Capernaum by a Roman centurion, evidently of great riches, high rank and liberal mind. He was the commander of the Roman garrison and built a splendid temple for the Jews upon the hill top. This good man, as we know, had a servant whom he loved, and that servant, being at the point of death, the elders of the town besought Jesus to heal him. Jesus went with them toward the centurion's house, and in the street met friends coming to meet him, with a request from that gentleman that the Lord should not come into the sickroom, but should speak the word and his servant would be healed. Turning to his disciples, Jesus said: "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

At Tell Hum, a hamlet of Shepherd's huts, half buried among the underbrush, are the ruins of what was once an elaborate building, ninety feet long. The walls were of fine white marble and it was adorned by a Greek portico, a colonnade, a noble cornice and finely wrought Corinthian pillars. The shapeless heap of ruins are supposed to have been the synagogue built by the Roman centurion, and if so they mark one of the most sacred places on earth, for in that building Jesus delivered the discourse reported in the sixth chapter of the gospel of St. John, when his text was, "I am the Bread of Life."

It is quite remarkable that both the great churches of the East, which have fought so fiercely for the possession of other sacred sites in Palestine, should have entirely ignored this place, one of the most memorable of all those associated with the Saviour. For here He

not only healed the centurion's servant, but raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead. He lived in Capernaum almost continually after His baptism by John. There He healed the mother-in-law of Peter and the man sick of palsy, restored the withered hand, spoke the most striking of His parables and delivered the most eloquent of His discourses.

From this neighborhood also He called together twelve men whom He had chosen to preach the gospel and establish His kingdom upon the earth. Several of them were fishermen and made their living with nets in the Sea of Galilee. The pickled fish of this lake were once shipped to Rome, Greece, Spain and all the great markets of the world, and long caravans of camels loaded with them were driven to Jerusalem at the yearly feasts, to feed the multitude. Fishing was the occupation of thousands in those days and was very profitable, but very little is done nowadays. The only two boats upon the lake are for tourists, belong to Germans, and fish is seldom served at the Tiberius Hotel. This is attributed to the character and habits of the Arabs, who make up the greater part of the present population. They do not like the water and will seldom trust themselves upon its treacherous surface. If the lake was covered with boats, people say, they would prefer to travel all around its shores upon the slow-paced camel. As there is no demand for boats, the very art of building them is lost. I was told that there is not a carpenter upon the whole coast who has either the tools or the materials or the experience to construct one. The two boats now used by tourists are said to have been brought over from Haifa by wagon. Occasionally some of the inhabitants of the lake region fish, but they have no taste for it.



Placid as the surface of the lake seems, furious squalls are frequent. This phenomenon seems all the more remarkable because it is surrounded by high hills, and the pit in which it lies is nearly 900 feet below the sea. But these are said to be the very causes of sudden and violent tempests. Meteorologists explain that the hot, moist air from the surface of the lake rises toward the sky and that whenever the wind blows from certain directions the ravines through the mountains which converge upon the lake act like funnels and suck down the cold air which causes the atmospheric commotions. Such tempests are not only violent, but often come suddenly with a change in the wind, and when the sky is perfectly clear. These phenomena occurred in the time of the Saviour. You will remember when Jesus was sleeping on a pillow in the hinder part of the ship. His disciples aroused Him with a cry: "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" and He arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, "Peace, be still."

Galilee is the garden of Palestine and has the most prosperous looking farms and the most contented and comfortable people. Even the name has a musical and merry sound. Everything grows there, from the wheat of the Caspian Sea to the Egyptian palm. When the hills of Judea are rocky and bare, when the meadows of Samaria are burnt brown, and the valleys of Sharon are parched with drought, the lowlands of Galilee are bright with flowers and growing crops. Every hill in Galilee, every bit of bottom land, is a wheat field; the mud walls are covered with myrtle and the air is scented with the perfume of the orange flower and the syringa. Galilee measures fifty miles north and south and between thirty and thirty-five miles east and west.



It consists of three series of plateaus or zones, rising one above another toward Lebanon, and culminating in the snowy peak of Hermon. David sang in the Psalms of "the dew of Hermon, that cometh down from the mountains of Zion." In summer hot harvesters lift their perspiring faces toward the snow on Hermon's summit and feel the cool breezes that they call its "gift."

The country has always been famed for its fertility, its rich pastures and luxuriant orchards and vineyards. That part of it west of the Sea of Galilee is the most beautiful and in the Roman period was densely peopled. Galilee owes her superior fruitfulness over Judea and Samaria to Mount Hermon. There is no greater rainfall here than in those provinces, but the melting snows upon Hermon always keep the irrigating ditches filled and serve as a permanent and unfailing reservoir from which the water is dispensed with regularity and generosity. For this reason the fields of Galilee are always green, while the neighboring country is a desert except in the rainy season, which lasts only five months.

The name Galilee means "district of the heathen" and was originally applied only to the highlands north of the lake. After the invasion of the Jews from Egypt the territory was divided between the tribes of Asher, Zebulun and Isachar, but after the captivity the population became very mixed, and has since represented every race on earth.

The roads of Galilee wind among lovely glades, through groves of oak, and are illuminated by an abundance of flowers. There is a profusion of underbrush and immense cactus hedges divide the fat wheat fields. The arable land is all under cultivation and

filled with prosperous villages, which are invariably surrounded by groves of olives and figs. There is an old proverb that it is easier to raise a legion of olive trees in Galilee than a single child in Judea. The high plateaus are favorable for the cultivation of both olives and mulberries, and a good deal of raw silk is sent out of the country, although but little is manufactured here.

Judged by their own standard the Galileans are probably more prosperous and have more to be thankful for than any other subjects of the Grand Turk, but it would be impossible to persuade an American family to live a week under the conditions in which these happy people have spent their lives. The mud huts of Ireland are palaces compared with the hovels of the Galilean villages. They have no windows or chimneys. The opening cut for a door furnishes all the light for the interior, and the smoke goes out of a hole in the roof. There is not a dozen feet of lumber in the entire building, except the door, which more often than otherwise is made of slats. The furniture is very scanty and most of the family sit on the earthen floor. The bed is a mass of sheep skins with the wool on, and it is filled with all sorts of insect life. The cooking is usually done in a camp kettle out-of-doors, and nearly all the food is stewed. In most households a single dish, a big earthen bowl, is considered sufficient table furniture, and around it the parents, children and any visiting friends gather and help themselves with their fingers. And yet they are happy, and boast that their country is "full of the blessings of Jehovah."

The mountain ranges show evidences of volcanic action, hot sulphurous springs are numerous, and



earthquakes are occasional. The last serious earthquake, in 1837, destroyed several towns, razed the walls of Tiberius and killed a large number of people. The character of the population is volcanic also. They have always been famous for their independent and revolutionary disposition. They have never submitted to despotism. They have frequently revolted against their rulers, and the national spirit is very strong. They resemble the Italians in many respects. Private feuds and quarrels are numerous; murders are frequent because of their quick tempers and passionate dispositions, but the Galileans have always been a chivalrous race. Their fidelity is often unreasonable, but never insincere. The Talmud says that the Galileans are more anxious for honor than for money, and to this day a Galilean Jew will tell you that he is thankful that none of his race betrayed Jesus, the Christ.

Their customs and laws, their dialect and habits, all differ from those of Judea. The Jews of Galilee have had the reputation of being more liberal in the observance of the law than the Judeans, by whom, as a consequence, they have ever been despised. While the Judeans have been tenacious in holding to ancient customs and traditions, and zealous in their desire to preserve the laws and conditions of the mosaic era, the Galileans are fond of innovations and defy conventionalities and restraints. The Jews of Judea and Samaria are melancholy, but the Galileans are hopeful and joyous. But there is no community of interests in Galilee, however, no coöperation, no unity of purpose. There are few partnerships because the people distrust each other, and that is one reason why the country has never really prospered.

The Jews of Galilee lack the wealth and substance



of those of other parts of Palestine. They may be just as shrewd, but they are not as frugal or patient or enterprising.

About four miles north of Nazareth are two wretched little villages named Kafr Kenna and Khurbet Kana, both of which claim to be the Cana of Galilee where Jesus attended a wedding and turned the water into wine. Both of them are mud-built hamlets of a dozen cabins, and the people are poor, ragged and indolent. Either one may have been the place. There is absolutely no way to determine the dispute between the rivals, and consequently the Greek monks have one, and the Roman Catholic monks the other, and both sustain their pretensions by elaborate arguments. A careful examination of both sites by Biblical scholars reaches only one result, that there is no evidence in favor of either, and yet the miracle occurred somewhere in that neighborhood, and the little town where Christ attended that wedding with his mother has a reputation which neither Nineveh, nor Babylon, nor Rome, nor Athens ever enjoyed. Whenever and wherever there is a Christian marriage there the scene at Cana of Galilee is always remembered.

It was at one of these towns also that Christ healed the son of "a certain nobleman," but it is evident that no nobleman ever lived at Cana of Galilee.

Driving from Nazareth to Tiberius, we passed around the base of Mount Tabor, a majestic dome which rises from the plain as a conspicuous landmark. There is supposed to have taken place the transfiguration of the Saviour in the presence of Peter, James and John, and I believe that the identity of the mountain is not disputed. The summit is about 2,000 feet above the level of the sea and about 1,000 feet higher than the sur-

rounding plain. It is about five miles by the road from the base to the summit, and the climb takes about an hour and a half. The mountain is composed of cretaceous limestone, as are the hills west and east of it, and there are frequent evidences of volcanic disturbance. Seen from the south or north Tabor describes the arc of a great circle; from the east it rises abruptly like a truncated cone; from the west it appears wedge-shaped like a pyramid, and hence the photographs and sketches of the mountain differ materially, according to the point of view.

The slopes of the holy mountain are embellished with beautiful groves of oaks and clumps of underbrush, and, although water is scarce, they seem to grow rapidly without irrigation.

Near the base of the mountain by the roadside are two khans or corrals, as we would call them, for the accommodation of caravans. Here camels and donkeys find rest, food and water while their owners or drivers lie around on the straw and make themselves as comfortable as possible. The khans were originally castles, but were abandoned years ago. On Monday of each week a market is held there and attended by farmers from every direction. Hundreds of people come in to sell and buy on those occasions, and form a busy, picturesque and interesting scene.

Upon the summit of Mount Tabor are vast piles of ruins belonging to several different periods, most of them being the overthrown walls of churches and castles dating from the Middle Ages. There is a tradition that the Jews fortified the place during the revolution of the Galileans that took place in the year 67 A. D., and the Empress Helena is said to have actually carried out the vow of St. Peter that he would build three

tabernacles, "One for Thee, one for Moses and one for Elias." It is known also that the Crusaders erected formidable fortifications, which were destroyed by the Saracens in the thirteenth century. Both the Greeks and the Roman Catholics have churches and monasteries, and both claim to possess the actual spot upon which the transfiguration took place. Upon the anniversary of that event the priests and monks of both denominations gather upon the summit of Tabor and celebrate with great pomp and ceremony. It is the ambition of many pious people to be buried upon Mount Tabor, and for that purpose they go there to die, making legacies to the monasteries in order to secure the privilege. For that reason funerals are frequent, and I was told that there are not fewer than 50,000 graves upon the mountain.





XIV

Tiberias, the City of Herod





## XIV

### TIBERIAS, THE CITY OF HEROD

Herod Antipas built the city of Tiberias for his capital when, after the death of his father, Herod the Great, he became Tetrarch of Galilee. According to Josephus the work was begun in the year 16 A. D. and finished in seven years. His brother Philip, of whom he was jealous, had built a city and called it Julias, in honor of the favorite daughter of the Roman emperor, and Herod Antipas, in hope of displacing him in Caesar's favor, built one more splendid and named it after Tiberias himself. He selected a site at the base of a steep hill, around the waters of a hot spring, among the ruins of an ancient city and the graves of a forgotten race. The hill was crowned with a picturesque castle; the slopes were covered with temples, palaces and other public buildings, the streets were wide and well paved, a port was built and a pier extended into the waters of Galilee; high walls three miles in length encircled the official section of the city, and in the center was a splendid structure, in imitation of the palaces of Rome, which was called the Golden House because the sheet lead laid upon its roof was gilded. We do not know and we cannot judge how this building may have compared in beauty of architecture, in splendor and in size with the ideals of the present day, but contemporary writers described its magnificence in gorgeous words, and its cost confirms their statements.

The fact that a burial place had been disturbed in laying the foundations of the city in violation of

the Mosaic law, made it impossible for Jews to live in Tiberias because contact with graves defiled their persons for seven days. Herod was therefore compelled to people the city he had built with adventurers and immigrants from foreign lands. He brought mechanics from Italy, artists from Greece; laborers, sailors and all sorts of men from the islands of the sea, from Egypt and Asia Minor. He proclaimed Tiberias a refuge for the homeless, the persecuted and the poor of all sects and nations; he offered an asylum to escaped slaves, and even purchased from the Arab tribes of the desert prisoners of war who were held in captivity, to whom he gave their freedom provided they would settle in his new capital. For many families he built houses; to many more he gave lands in the surrounding country, and he made it known throughout the civilized world that inducements of any sort would be granted to those who assisted him in carrying out his plans. The officers of state, the captains of the army, courtiers of all ranks and others who aspired to Herod's favor built houses, and some of them erected temples and shrines, so that the town grew like a mushroom and soon covered the hillside until the entire space within the walls was occupied with what must have been a superior class of dwellings for those days. No other city in the East was ever erected in this manner.

Herod Antipas inherited the Grecian tastes and tendencies of his father, with his power, and as this was well known, those who sought his favor by coming to the city employed Greek architects and adopted the Greek designs, so that Tiberias resembled cities of Greece. There was a forum in which the people met, transacted business and exchanged gossip; a stadium



in which the youth of Galilee engaged in Olympic games, a theater resembling those of Athens in which Greek and Roman comedies and tragedies were produced; a mint, the coinage of which is still extant and can be purchased at the curio-shops of Europe to-day; a vast barrack for the military garrison, which was uniformed like a Roman legion. Columns, arches, shrines, statues of Roman gods and emperors and other public ornaments were erected similar to those at Athens and Rome, and in a few years, as one might naturally expect under these circumstances, Tiberias became the most famous of all cities, one of the wonders of the earth, so that its name was applied to the waters of the Lake of Gennesaret and was adopted by the Romans in their official correspondence. It was a city of luxury, pleasure and sin, and naturally an abomination to the Jews, although after the destruction of Jerusalem, in spite of the Mosaic law, it became the chief seat of the Jewish nation.

The Sanhedrim was transferred here from Sepphoris and the school of the Talmud was established within its walls. It was noted for its scholars, and is still one of the four holy cities of the Jewish faith. Safed is the other in the north, and these two almost rivaled in sanctity Jerusalem and Hebron, the two holy cities of the south. The so-called Jerusalem Talmud came into existence here, and here was published the ancient law known as the Mishna. It was here that the Hebrew Bible, now universally accepted, was written. St. Jerome studied the Hebrew language here with a famous rabbi, and some Jews believe that the Messiah will rise from the waters of the lake, will land at Tiberias, and at Safed erect his throne. "I have created seven seas," saith the Lord, "but out of them all I



have chosen none but the Sea of Gennesaret." Such was the remarkable change in the sentiments of the Jews toward the capital of Antipas Herod.

It is not probable that Jesus ever entered Tiberias, although He might have done so without having the fact mentioned by the evangelists. The four gospels do not pretend to be a complete record of His labors or His life, but He could not have entered the city without violating the law of Moses,"as I have explained, and we know that both He and His disciples avoided criticism in that respect. He was sent for twice by Herod, the tetrarch, who, having heard of the wonders He had wrought in Galilee—raising the dead, healing the sick, making even the sea and the wind to obey Him—was pricked by a remorseful conscience and lived in terror lest John the Baptist might have risen from the dead.

This new prophet who had so suddenly appeared from Nazareth gave Herod more alarm perhaps than could be excited by any other cause. Hence he sent one of his officers of Capernaum to find out Jesus and invite Him to the Golden House. Jesus, mindful of the fate of John the Baptist, did not go. His hour had not yet come. So He departed thence in a ship into a desert place apart, where the multitude followed Him, and with five loaves and two small fishes He fed five thousand men, besides women and children. When He heard that Herod's messenger was seeking Him, He probably stepped into Peter's boat and crossed to the desert side of the lake, out of Herod's jurisdiction, where He was safe.

This was not the Herod who reigned at Jerusalem when Christ was born and murdered all the babes in Bethlehem because he could not find that one which

lay in a manger and invoked the angels' song. That was Herod the Great, who, when he died, divided his kingdom among three of his sons and gave Galilee to Antipas Herod, an ambitious, reckless, unscrupulous but weak man, who was entirely controlled by his niece Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had taken to his palace in defiance of all law, morals, decency and public sentiment.

During his father's life Herod had married a daughter of Aretas, an Arab sheik, while Herodias, yet a child, had been given as a bride to her uncle Philip. She lived with him as long as old Herod was on earth, and had a daughter called Salome. By Herod's will, Philip, who was a weak prince, was cut off from the succession and received neither a crown nor the governorship of a province, nor even a fortune. Left without power or position, and in poverty, Herodias, his wife, at once began to make love to her other uncle, Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, who had inherited the glory, the authority and the wealth of his father. She could not marry him, being her husband's brother, because of the law. A king might have more than one queen, but not the wife of another living man, hence he could not make Herodias his wife while his brother was still alive. Yet he and Herodias decided to take their fate into their own hands and lived openly together in the Golden House.

The Arab princess who had shared Herod's throne gathered up her jewels, summoned her slaves and sought refuge with her father in the desert. Aretas instantly made war on Herod to avenge this insult to his child. Josephus says that armies were raised on both sides and great preparations were made for the struggle, but that Herod sent a general to command



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his forces instead of going himself. For the lack of competent leadership and because of the treachery of some of his officers who sympathized with the Arab queen and despised the weakness of their own sovereign, Herod's army was destroyed and he was compelled to make humiliating terms with the Bedouin chieftain.

In the meantime John the Baptist was the most influential man in all the country, and Herod, wishing to enlist his influence and support among the people, sent for him to come to his castle at Macherus, east of the Jordan, from which he was directing the war. St. Matthew tells the story with a graphic pen in the fourteenth chapter of his gospel. John the Baptist rebuked Herod in the plainest language. "Herod laid hold on John and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, it is not lawful for thee to have her. And when he would have put him to death he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. But when Herod's birthday was kept the daughter of Herodias (Salome) danced before them and pleased Herod. Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John the Baptist's head in a charger. And the king was sorry. Nevertheless for his oath's sake and them which sat with him at meat he commanded it to be given her. And he sent and beheaded John in the prison. And his head was brought in a charger and given to the damsel and she brought it to her mother, and his disciples came and took up the body and buried it and went and told Jesus."

There are few incidents mentioned in the Bible upon



which secular history sheds so much light, and it is the universal testimony of secular writers that it caused the downfall of Herod. The people believed that the destruction of his army was ordered by God as a just punishment for the assassination of the prophet. It is a curious coincidence that at the very place where John the Baptist was beheaded Christ took little children up in His arms and put His hands upon them and blessed them and said, Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Macherus is on the farther side of the Jordan, near Mount Nebo, where Moses died, and thus Moses and John, the first and the last of the prophets, with thirteen centuries between them, closed their eyes upon the same landscape.

Down in Spain there is a sequel to this story. According to the traditions Salome, the daughter of Herodias, married a Roman general, who was afterward transferred from Galilee to Gaul and obtained much notoriety for his cruelty and tyranny over the people. His wife was equally detested and met with a singular but significant fate. While skating one day upon the river at Cereda, Spain, she broke through the ice and sank out of sight. When she rose to the surface again the current was so strong that it carried her down stream with terrible force, and, striking the sharp edge of the ice below her chin, the head of Salome was severed from her body and went skating along among the crowd of horrified spectators, who shrank from it as it finally lodged upon a piece of rough ice exactly the size and shape of the charger upon which the head of John the Baptist was brought from the prison. Those who do not believe this story may go to Spain and see the place for themselves.

People who have seen them all declare that there is no city in the East so dirty as Tiberias, or so little to be desired as a place of residence, notwithstanding the fact that a man of such rare taste as Herod Antipas selected it for his capital. Being in a pocket 950 feet below the sea, and overhung upon the west by a high mountain, which shuts off the cool breezes from the Mediterranean, very little air reaches the city, and the atmosphere is foul beyond expression. In summer when the accumulated filth is festering under the sun and the thermometer often hangs at 100 degrees for weeks at a time day and night, the odors, it is said, can be perceived upon the tops of the hills that surround it.

The population is said to number 4,000, mostly Jews of Russian and Polish origin, many of whom are sent there to study at the expense of charitable Hebrew societies in Europe and elsewhere. Others have gone there to die, and are in the last stages of incurable diseases, while still more are refugees from Roumania, Poland, and other countries, where the race is persecuted. In spite of the fact that there is nothing in Tiberias for them to do, and no opportunity for them to gain a living, the number of Jews is constantly increasing, and those who are familiar with the situation believe that it will increase as long as they are allowed to depend upon the Israelite Alliance and other benevolent organizations. The Jews in Tiberias wear a distinctive dress consisting of fur caps, even in summer, and long black gowns similar to those of the Catholic priests of Europe. There are ten synagogues, and the Mosaic ordinances are observed with great scrupulousness. The old-fashioned Jews wear little curls of hair in front of their ears, which give them a



singular appearance. The study of the Talmud still flourishes, and some of the rabbis have great reputations for learning.

There are said to be only two hundred Christians in Tiberias, and the term is applied to all residents who are neither Moslems nor Jews. The Free Church of Scotland maintains a mission, a hospital and a school, and the Orthodox Greeks have a monastery and school outside of the town which was built in 1869. The Franciscans have a monastery, a school and a church on the other side of the town upon the spot where, it is claimed, the miraculous draught of fishes took place. The Jews have several charitable institutions and schools.

During the spring tide of the year, the vicinity of the lake is a paradise. There is no dust, the fields are carpeted with flowers, the crops are growing with tropical rapidity, the fruit trees are aflame with blossoms, the air is filled with fragrance, and although the sun is very hot, the temperature is not uncomfortable in the shade or after twilight.

The only place of importance in Galilee north of Tiberias, and, in fact, the only town worth mentioning between Nazareth and Damascus, is Safed, which is also settled by Jews and is a much larger and more agreeable city than Tiberias. Upon the road to Safed you pass the ruins of several towns that are mentioned in the Scriptures. Both Bethsaida and Koraisin, which like Capernaum, were under the Saviour's curse, are entirely extinct and obliterated. Even their location is a matter of dispute. About half way to Safed is an ancient khan called Jubb Yusuf, which, the Arabs say, incloses the pit into which Joseph was thrown by his brethren, but there is no foundation for the tradition.



The actual place is south of Tiberias, near the town of Dothan, which has been well authenticated.

The bogus pit is in a small court by the side of the khan, and looks like an ordinary well, being three feet in diameter, thirty feet deep, and lined with masonry. The water percolates through the crevices in the rocks at the bottom and the supply never fails. It is pure, cool and sweet. This of itself contradicts the Scripture story, which tells us distinctly that the pit into which Joseph was cast was a natural hole in the ground and that there was no water in it.

There are many strange traditions in that part of the country regarding Jacob and his family. Near the old khan is a bridge over the Jordan called Jisr Benat Yakob (the bridge of Jacob's daughters), and a little mosque near it upon the western bank of the river is called the Mukam Benat Yakob (the tomb of Jacob's daughters). Beneath the mosque is a large square cave, undoubtedly artificial, extending about thirty feet into the rock, and rows of recesses or shelves for coffins have been cut in the walls. The Moslem traditions relate that Jacob lived in this cave with his children, and, when he was old and blind, they brought him Joseph's coat and the smell of it at once restored his sight.

A green curtain conceals what tourists are told are the tombs of the seven daughters of Jacob, but no Christian is allowed to enter. It is sacred ground, and the Moslem attendant would certainly kill any foreigner who attempted to force his way in.

The surface of the ground in this vicinity is strewn with boulders as black as coal, and the peasants call them Jacob's tears, believing that they were originally white, but were turned black by the tears which

dropped from the eyes of the stricken father while he was weeping for Joseph.

It is a shepherd's country and abounds in sheep. The hills on both sides of the Jordan are covered with flocks, and at this time of year they find excellent grazing. As we rode along through that part of Palestine we often met large flocks upon their way from the far interior, the ranges in the valley of the Euphrates, "from the other side of Jordan, from the green fields of Eden," which were being driven for sale to the sea coast. It is customary for the shepherds of the interior to select a certain portion of their flocks for this purpose in the spring of every year. In dress, manners, language and customs the shepherds closely resemble those of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and they handle their sheep in the same way, "putting a space betwixt drove and drove," as Jacob did, and leading the young lambs "softly." If overdriven the animals are likely to die, or at least their flesh will be worthless for mutton. The weary ones are sold on the wayside or are killed and eaten by the shepherds themselves. The flocks grow smaller as they go farther south, because at nearly every village and town and often at the farming settlements a few are sold.

Palestine has always been a great place for sheep. The Bible tells us that Job had a flock of 14,000; Solomon sacrificed 120,000 sheep at the dedication of the temple; when Moses overcame Midian the spoils of battle were 500,000 sheep, 72,000 cattle and 61,000 asses; the King of Moab gave the King of Israel as tribute annually 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams, with their wool. Nor will these figures seem excessive when considered in connection with the enormous



wool industry of Palestine to-day. More than 10,000 tons of wool are exported annually from Beirut; from the neighboring seaports it is the principal export, and from Jaffa they send about £100,000 in value each year.

When the Children of Israel entered the Promised Land, the tribes of Reuben and Gad, which had a large multitude of cattle, recognized the value of these pastures and asked for them. It was here that Christ got the ideas for His parables concerning the sheep; here He first called Himself the Good Shepherd, and looking beyond the plains to the vineyards upon the hillsides He called Himself the True Vine. The sweetest poetry of Jewish life, the loveliest pictures that have ever been painted concern the pastoral habits of the people, and any traveler who drives through this region will realize the influence of shepherd life upon the Jewish imagination. The founder of the Jewish nation was a shepherd; the founder of Christianity said, "Feed my sheep."

Safed is a large wool market and a strictly modern town, perhaps the most modern town in Palestine, and no other has increased so rapidly in population. It is the market for a large area and the headquarters of the Bedouin sheep and wool trade. There are perhaps 25,000 inhabitants, of whom about one-half are Moslems and the other half Jews, with a few Protestants and orthodox Greeks. The British Society for the Conversion of the Jews has a mission there, but I cannot learn that they have made any converts. To the Jews this town is holy, and their modern prophets have fixed upon Safed as the seat of the Messiah when He comes. Many of the Safed Jews are Poles and Roumanians and are engaged in various forms of commerce



and industry. The Jewish quarter of the town is unspeakably dirty, but several of the eighteen synagogues are handsome and costly buildings.

The Safed Jews are intensely fanatical and have violent discussions among themselves over little points of form and practice, similar to those referred to in the Scriptures. They observe all the particulars of the Mosaic law in the strictest manner. They will not work, or walk a mile, or gather food or even cook on Sunday. They limit their exercise to the Sabbath day's journey, which is six furlongs, and some of them will not even wind up their watches on Sunday, because the act might be considered labor. As many of the Mosaic laws were written for walled towns and as Safed has no walls, the Jewish inhabitants have provided an imaginary one, in order to protect their own consciences. They have placed a series of poles at proper distances around the town and strung them with a wire, which looks very much like an ordinary telephone wire, but is actually a substitute for a wall.

Their fastidiousness in regard to etiquette and ceremonies is amusing, but people who desire to study the ancient customs of the Jews find such things very important.

Etiquette is considered of much more importance among the Orientals, and particularly among the Arabs, than with the busier communities of the West. The Bedouins are particularly scrupulous in observing the social laws, and a desert robber who has lived all his life upon the sands of Arabia and has seldom seen the inside of a house is as punctilious and ceremonious as a master of ceremonies at the court of the czar. These notions are inherited from very ancient days, and, although not one in a hundred of the

Bedouins can read and write, or give the name of any country but his own, all have a profound knowledge of the laws of precedence and politeness. They possess a native dignity, a gracefulness of manner and a sense of hospitality which the western nations with all their arts, education and refinement cannot imitate, and, although these very circumstances make an interchange of courtesy with Bedouins undesirable, it is nevertheless an interesting subject of inquiry and observation. A visit to a Bedouin's tent is always to be avoided because it involves so many ceremonies and so much time that it is more likely to terminate in enmity than otherwise, especially if the traveler is in a hurry, as travelers usually are.

XV

The Pathway of Jesus  
From Nazareth to Jerusalem





## XV

### THE PATHWAY OF JESUS FROM NAZARETH TO JERUSALEM.

From Nazareth to Jerusalem, by way of Mount Tabor, Nain, and Endor, across the foot of the plain of Jezreel, skirting the base of Mount Gilboa, along the sources of the River Kishon, by Tel-Dothan, where Joseph was put into the pit, thence via Samaria, Shechem, Gilgal, Bethel and Shiloh, the distance, as the crow flies, is about sixty-five miles. By the camel trail, avoiding the steep grades and the unfordable brooks and swampy places, it is eighty miles. There are no roads, which seemed strange to us, for the history of Samaria is full of chariots and horsemen. We seldom read of them in connection with Judea, which is a country of barren mountains, rocky and tortuous ravines, but Samaria has long, level stretches and easy grades. The reason is that the present population of Samaria needs no highway, for it has no wheels. I do not believe there is a carriage in the whole province. There may be a cart or two, hauled by oxen, but all the transportation and travel is done upon the back of "the ship of the desert," whose long, swinging stride can cover the distance between Nazareth and Jerusalem in about thirty-five hours if he is kept in motion. It would be a very tedious journey, however, to one unaccustomed to camel riding. Tourists make it on horseback, sometimes in two days, but generally in three, stopping over night at Nablus, at Bethel or at

some other point upon the journey and visiting the various points of interest on the way.

There is nothing to stop for except rest and ruins, for, with the exception of Nablus, which occupies the site of ancient Shechem, everything has gone to dilapidation and decay. There are no hotels, but only khans for the accommodation of camel trains, which a foreigner could scarcely endure even with the most liberal supply of insect powder and antiseptics. Zoölogical gardens are vacuums compared with them. It is not possible for a man accustomed to clean surroundings to sleep and eat in these places or accept any of the accommodations to which an Arab is accustomed. He could not eat the food, in the first place, even if he were blind and deaf and his olfactory nerves were paralyzed. I have traveled over a good many primitive countries, in the mountains of Central and South America, on the pampas of the Argentine Republic and in the jungles of the tropics, but I have never known such filth and such defiance of decency and sanitary law as may be seen daily in Palestine.

There are several agencies which make it their business to soften the way for travelers. They will provide at a reasonable expense, from \$7.50 to \$10 a day, according to the number of the party, saddle horses or camels, tents, cooks and food, guides and interpreters and every other necessity for the journey and a good many comforts. By long experience they have reduced things to a system, and the traveler has nothing to do but to pay his money in advance, follow instructions and enjoy the journey as much as he can. It is not a pleasant journey. People who go there for pleasure will be disappointed. At the same time the hardships are no greater than one has to endure



while traveling in all semi-civilized countries. The food and cooking are excellent, the tents and beds are comfortable and afford sufficient protection against storm and cold. The saddles are easy and the animals are so accustomed to the road and so melancholy of disposition that they will take care of themselves and their riders at the same time. The climate in the spring and fall—from the first of March to the first of June and from the first of October to the first of December—is very agreeable, neither too hot nor too cold. The sun may be a little oppressive in the middle of the day and the nights may be chilly in the higher altitudes, but it is customary to stop for a couple of hours' rest and luncheon at noon and an extra blanket is easily carried.

Nowhere else in the world has experience and ingenuity done so much to make it easy and agreeable for tourists. Cook & Sons are the pioneers, and, having the largest capital, control the best animals, the best guides and the best stopping places. Their equipment is first-class, and they are as reliable as the Bank of England. Their charges are a little higher than those of some other agencies, but it always pays to have the best.

Our Lord and His disciples went over this trail several times on their way between Galilee and Jerusalem. They traveled on foot or upon the backs of donkeys, with a loaf of bread and a few figs and olives in their pouches. They slept in the caves in the rocks and drank the water of the wells along the way, which we were strictly prohibited from drinking because it is polluted with all kinds of microbes and other enemies of the human race. More tourists have acquired fevers by drinking out of those holy wells, sacred to the

memory of the patriarchs, than from any other cause, and when you hear of people having typhoid fever after visiting the Holy Land you may know that they have violated the rules of the road and have neglected the ordinary precautions which every traveler should observe in a strange country. Cook & Sons and other tourist agencies provide plenty of bottled water, or a traveler may take his own supply, but the water in the Pool of Samaria, Jacob's Well and other places should be avoided as if it were arsenic or cyanide of potassium.

The trail you follow is the great caravan road between Damascus and Egypt, and was known as the Via Maris—the way to the sea. The Romans paved it and took toll from travelers. St. Matthew kept one of the toll gates. But in these degenerate days the pavement has entirely disappeared, and in order to avoid the mud holes the camels make a new trail nearly every spring. The scenery is not grand, but is very attractive, the fields are green, the olive groves are lovely and the numerous villages are filled with picturesque and dirty natives. Dozens of dogs will come out and bark at you as you pass by. Groups of half-naked urchins will scream all manner of insults and obscene epithets, and maybe they will throw stones. The women, who are usually washing at the wells or working in the fields, or sitting by the threshold of their cabins, hunting for wild beasts in the hair of their children, will smile pleasantly, and if you draw your kodak will follow you and clamor for baksheesh. The men folks are dignified, reserved and reticent. They are generally on horseback, with curtains of white flowing from the backs of their turbans, and long robes of reddish brown cotton falling from their



shoulders and covering the haunches of their horses. At their girdles are small arsenals, revolvers and knives galore, and shotguns are generally swung over the pommels of their saddles, for everybody goes armed, not so much for offensive and defensive purposes, but because it is the custom of the country.

There is a good deal of shooting, however. The Arabs are quick to take offense; they are vindictive and violent in their passions, and the *lex talionis*, the law of personal vengeance, still prevails. A woman sat weeping at the door of a mill as we rode by one day, and supposing that she was ill or had been badly treated, we inquired the cause of her distress. We found that it was only a case of murder. Her husband had been shot the night before for being too familiar with somebody else's property. You seldom hear of an arrest or a police court. The Turkish government exercises a general supervision over the country, but the Arab sheiks are held responsible for the behavior of their tribesmen, and administer law and justice in their own way. One morning we saw a couple of prisoners handcuffed together and accompanied by two mounted soldiers passing along the road to Haifa. They were deserters from the army. If they had been ordinary thieves or murderers they would have been punished by the sheik of their tribe instead of by the government.

There is very little disorder in Palestine, very little crime, and few of the vices known to civilized countries. No man ever gets drunk unless he is a Christian, for the Mohammedans abstain from wine and all other intoxicating liquors. They do not steal from each other, except cattle and goats, and that is a capital offense, punishable by death on sight. Ordinary



stealing is practically unknown. There are no locks on the doors of any of the houses and the curtains of the tents are always loose, for several reasons, the chief of which is that the people haven't anything worth stealing. They never have money and carry on their backs everything of value. Millions of dollars' worth of merchandise is carried over this trail by camel caravans every year, however, yet nothing is ever lost.

The same is true in South America, where the transportation is done by mules and llamas over the mountains. Cargoes of bullion are carried regularly every day, yet guards are unnecessary and burglar-proof safes could not be used. The mule drivers are perfectly trustworthy, and occasionally when some foreign adventurer organizes a raid, like one of the train robberies in the United States, they will die in defense of their cargoes.

The construction of the railways to Damascus and Jerusalem has diverted much of the commerce from this old road, but formerly all of the products of India and Egypt went this way to the sea coast for shipment to Genoa, Venice and Marseilles, where they were distributed through Europe and the rest of the world.

Abraham went over this trail when he came from the north toward Hebron and he halted at Shechem, under the noble groves, "the terebinths of Moreh," which have since been displaced by more useful and quite as beautiful olive trees. From his time caravans of camels have passed along this highway daily. The earth has trembled under the hoofs of Saladin's stallions, and the chariots of the Assyrians and the Romans have cut this turf with their wheels. The prodigal son followed the same trail when he came





THE EAST AND THE WEST.



home from the far country, and many of Christ's parables were told here.

Historical memories surround every name upon the map, scenes identified with the lives of the patriarchs, the prophets, the kings, are in range of the vision on every side; Deborah, one of the greatest women in history, reigned over this country; the vineyard of Naboth, which caused so much trouble to several people, was just a little distance to the west of us as we passed along; Elijah and Elisha dragged their weary feet along this road often and again. It was the scene of Jehu's furious driving, and every mile is connected in some way or another with the lives of Ahab and Jezebel, Judith and Holofernes. We passed what is said to be the tomb of John the Baptist, which is vouched for by St. Jerome. It is a small chamber hewn in the rocks in the crypt of a little church. The same chamber contains the tomb of Obadiah, governor of the palace of Ahab, and the Moslems believe that it once contained the bones of Elisha.

This was the "Crown of Ephraim," "the flower of his glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley." The Emperor Augustus gave Samaria to Herod, who fortified and embellished it and transformed a temple to Baal into a temple to Caesar. Herod was a great builder. He erected splendid palaces, gateways and colonnades, and after he had built Samaria he called it Sebaste, the Greek for Augustus. The Crusaders built a great cathedral at Samaria, whose roofless walls frown upon the columns of Herod. In his time Samaria was a fortress, and before the invention of gunpowder was invincible, but its glory has departed, and it is now nothing but a miserable and filthy village, and defaces a lovely landscape. The

ruins of Herod's temple and the colonnade which surrounded it lie strewn upon the ground. There has been little demand for building material in this part of the country, hence the carved marble and granite have not been disturbed. It must have been a beautiful building. The colonnade was a double series of pillars sixteen feet high, with Corinthian capitals, and extending 1,800 yards. Here "King Omri slept with his fathers, and Ahab, his son, reigned in his stead, who did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him." And his cruelty and crimes come back to us with vivid pictures as we enter the gates of Samaria, where Ahab heard his sentence of death from the prophet of Jehovah, and where dogs licked the blood that trickled from his chariot.

It is very strange that some of the religious organizations which are fighting among each other over the possession of bogus or doubtful places associated with Scriptural events do not take possession of Bethel, one of the oldest, holiest and most interesting of all the sites referred to in Christian history. It is now called Betin, and is an abandoned and desolate heap of ruins, with a few miserable hovels occupied by wretched families of Bedouins, who herd their sheep and goats upon the neighboring hills. Although both the Greek and the Roman Catholic monks are so keen in seeking and so tenacious in holding sacred places of less interest elsewhere, with the Armenians, the Maronites and several other religious organizations standing by and exhibiting their jealousy in various ways, Bethel and Shiloh both have been overlooked, and their locations are not even disputed.

The historical books of the Old Testament, although



supposed to have been written several centuries after the events of which they treat, are wonderfully accurate so far as their geography and descriptions of topography are concerned, and it is easy to follow the early invasions and migrations throughout all Syria by reading them. This fact is one of the strongest evidences in support of the historical truth of the Scriptures. Wherever a place is described in the Bible it can be easily identified, and the writers of the graphic stories we read in that most remarkable of all books were certainly familiar with the scenes depicted.

Many objects, however, are to be found at places mentioned in the Bible which are not referred to in the text, and therefore we know that they are comparatively modern. For example, at Bethel there is an enormous reservoir, 314 feet long and 217 feet wide, which at some remote period, but more recent than Jeremiah's time, was evidently built for irrigation purposes, but when and by whom nobody knows. It was supplied with water from springs in the bottom, but most of them are dry or have been choked up by rubbish so that there is no water except in a few spots where the Arab girls come to fill their pitchers just as we can imagine that the handmaidens of Sarah, Rachel and Deborah used to do in Bible times; and it is entirely probable, yes, almost certain, that Abraham and Jacob watered their flocks at this very place before the reservoir was built.

The hill called Bethel is a conspicuous place, rising several hundred feet from the plain and visible for a considerable distance. There are several ancient tombs, marble columns and other pieces of dressed stone, some of them bearing inscriptions and others showing evidences of elaborate carving, scattered



about the fields in the vicinity, and near the summit of the hill is a remarkable circle of large blocks of stone which the Moslems say is the place where King Jeroboam set up the golden calves for the Israelites to worship and brought down upon himself the wrath of Jehovah.

There is also the foundation of a large square tower, called Burj Betin by the natives, but, like the reservoir, its origin is lost in the mist of the ages. It was probably built by the Crusaders. The Moslems say that it marks the spot where Jacob slept that night when he saw the angels on the ladder and when God made with him the greatest covenant ever made with man, and said: "I am the Lord God of Abraham, thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed, and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and shall spread abroad to the west and to the east, and to the north and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And Jacob rose up early in the morning and took the stone that he had used for his pillow and set it up for a pillar and poured oil upon the top of it and he called the name of that place Bethel." And yet the place where this occurred is not only neglected, but absolutely abandoned, and no one has thought it worth while to erect a monument there since the days of the Crusaders.

The stone which Jacob used for a pillow is supposed to be the seat of the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey, and King Edward VII. sat upon it when he received the crown and scepter of the British Empire in June 1902. This stone is said to have been taken to Ireland by one of the early Christian missionaries, and the kings of Ireland were crowned upon it; it was then

carried to Scotland and was the throne of the Scottish kings for centuries, and finally in the reign of Edward the Confessor it was brought to London, and has since been in Westminster Abbey.

If there were no other associations, this alone should induce the British people to preserve and protect Bethel, or at least to erect some memorial that will counteract the neglect, for it is not only absolutely identified as one of the most ancient religious sanctuaries in the world, but it is the midst of a lovely landscape and surroundings that might be made very attractive, although to-day they are repulsive.

Queen Victoria traced her ancestry to Circa, daughter of Zedekiah, the last king of Judea, through James I., who placed the Lion of the Tribe of Judah upon the British standard. The story goes that 580 years before Christ, at the time of the Babylonian captivity, Circa, daughter of Zedekiah, arrived in Ireland and was married at Tara to Heremon, a prince of the Tuatha de Daman, which is the Celtic name for the Tribe of Dan. This young princess, at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, was rescued and taken to Egypt by the prophet Jeremiah, her guardian, and the palace Taphanes, in which she resided, was discovered by Dr. Petrie, the celebrated archeologist, in 1886. Jeremiah took with him the stone of testimony, "Bethel," and preserved it at the destruction of Jerusalem, and during the captivity of the Jews. It was the only witness of the compact between Jehovah and Israel. It was the stone that Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, used as a pillow when he laid down to sleep upon the starlit plains of Judea that memorable night when he was traveling from Bathsheba to Haran in search of a wife. It was then that he had his



dream, and saw angels and archangels ascending and descending a ladder that reached to Heaven. And Jehovah came to him and made the great promise which is being fulfilled to the Jews this very day. And Jacob took the stone and set it up for a pillow, and poured oil upon it and vowed a vow and called the name of the place "Bethel." The kings of Israel were crowned upon it from the time they ruled the nation—David, Saul, Solomon and all the rest, and when Jeremiah took it to Ireland it was used as the throne of the Irish kings. And they called it Lia Phail (the Stone Wonderful).

Fergus I. carried it to Scotland, and thence to London in the year 1200, and there it was placed in the seat of the British throne, and has been used at the coronation of every king and queen of England from Edward I. down to Edward VII. It is therefore the most precious historical object in the British Empire, as it was the palladium of Israel. It is an interesting fact that the altars of Ireland were called "Bethel" (houses of God).

The stone may be seen in Westminster Abbey in the seat of an old Gothic chair, which stands in the Chapel of St. Edward, beside the sword and shield of Edward III., and the graves of six kings, five queens, four princesses, one duke and a bishop.

If Mrs. Adams, the author of "Nearer, My God, to Thee," perhaps the favorite of more people than any other hymn in the English language, had ever seen Bethel, she would not have written some of her lines. To those who have never been among the hills of Ephraim, her hyperbole seems appropriate, but people who come to Bethel can never sing that hymn again with the same fervor. That is one of the great objec-



tions to visiting the Holy Land. So many illusions are destroyed.

Bethel is also the place where the naughty children mocked the Prophet Elisha and yelled "Go up, thou baldhead." Perhaps they are not the same children that threw stones and sticks at us, but at least they have the same dispositions.

Following the mountain ridge for an hour in a south-westerly direction and skirting the base of the mountain called Baal Hazor, referred to in the story of Samuel, we reach a little village, called Tibneh, of about 600 Christians, with a Greek church and school and a Franciscan monastery, which the late Rev. Dr. Eli Smith, an eminent Presbyterian missionary, after a thorough investigation, identified as the ancient Timnath-Serah, where Joshua, the great leader, the stout soldier and the master of military strategy, closed his long and glorious career when he was 110 years old. "And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-Serah, which is in Mount Ephraim on the north side of the hill of Gaash." It is surprising that so eminent a man as Joshua should have chosen this place for his tomb, but we do not know what reasons may have influenced him. The spot occupies a central position in the territory allotted to his own tribe, and the surroundings, which are bold, rugged and barren, may have appealed to his stalwart soul. The Roman road from Jerusalem to Caesarea passes through the village, and it is interesting in this connection to remember that St. Paul was escorted that way by a squad of soldiers on his way to Rome.

That the sepulcher was intended for a man of distinction is manifest by many evidences, and it seems to have been a favorite burying place, which is

natural, because Oriental people of all times and all sects have been in the habit of securing themselves tombs in the neighborhood of those of men they admired. The tomb itself is a chamber of stone divided into three parts by thick walls. The central chamber is nine by eight by six feet, those on either side are almost the same size. If this is really the burial place of Joshua, there is no more interesting sepulcher in the world.

On the other side of the old Roman road is an ancient oak which is claimed to be the oldest and the noblest tree in Palestine, and is called by the natives "the oak of Abraham," although I do not understand the reason.

This old Roman road was one of several built by Herod the Great, who was a very different man from his son, Antipas Herod, referred to in the previous chapter. You cannot visit any part of Palestine without seeing evidences of his enterprise, his public spirit and his wisdom, and in his time the country must have been at its best. By birth an Arab, by profession a Jew, by policy a Roman, by the force of his genius and cunning he rose in thirty years from a captaincy in Caesar's army to occupy the throne of David and Solomon. He was a man of intense energy, courage, ability, eloquence and unlimited ambition, and with these qualities had the intellectual culture and artistic taste of the Greeks. He loved luxury and wealth, and his pleasures were imitated from the profligates of Athens. He gave his children Greek names, stamped the Macedonian helmet and shield upon his coin, employed architects from Athens to design his palaces, introduced Olympian games into Palestine and spent much of his time studying the Greek language and literature.



But with all these good points he was merciless, treacherous and insincere. He endeavored with great patience, skill and prudence to persuade the rabbis to consent to religious toleration; his most beloved companion was the high priest of the Jews; he encouraged learning, literature, science and art; he favored the common people at the expense of the nobles and the princes, and even allowed himself to be proclaimed as the Messiah from whom they expected deliverance.

He restored the glory of Zion; under his hand and with his wealth Jerusalem became even more splendid than in the days of Solomon. He rebuilt it from wall to wall and made a city of marble palaces where there had been a town of mud huts. And as visible evidences of his adoration for Jehovah, he commenced a more costly temple than that erected by Solomon.

Herod had nine wives, all living at the same time, and chose them from policy as well as from love. He had also a large number of favorites without asking the blessing of the church or the consent of the law upon their union. One of his wives was his brother's child, another was his sister's child, and one of his concubines was Cleopatra, afterward the famous Queen of Egypt. His crimes were innumerable and ghastly. When he was early upon the throne he murdered all the priests and nobles who objected to his authority, seventy in number; he caused his brother-in-law, Aristobulus, to be drowned; he slew one of his fathers-in-law, Hyrcanus; he assassinated his sister's husband, his uncle Joseph, and with his own hands put Antipater, his own first-born son, to death. He murdered his proud queen, Mariamne, the Maccean, in his rage, and attempted to betray Cleopatra



to death, but she escaped him; he strangled her mother, Alexandra, and Alexander and Aristobulus, his two sons by Mariamne, for fear they would try to avenge her death. Some of his nearest friends and companions were poisoned, drowned by force, strangled or stabbed to death. In every part of the country aged men, unoffending children and innocent women were put to the sword, but the crime for which the world remembers him is the massacre of the innocents at Bethlehem in order that the Christ Child might not escape.

A few months later this splendid but wicked monarch died like a dog in the midst of his luxuries, eaten up by putrid sores, surrounded by quarreling children and conspiring slaves. One of his slaves, named Simon, plundered the royal palace of its treasures, burned the magnificent public buildings that Herod had erected, placed the dead man's crown upon his own brow and proclaimed himself the Jewish Messiah. In the heat of the sensation caused by Herod's death many of the people bowed before this creature as a Christ and king until Valerius Gratus, the Roman general in command of the garrison, seized him and struck off his head.

XVI

Modern Samaria and Modern  
Samaritans





## XVI

### MODERN SAMARIA AND MODERN SAMARITANS

The region around Samaria is full of history from the remotest times. It is first mentioned in the sixteenth chapter of First Kings, which says: "In the thirty and first year of Asa, King of Judea, began Omri to reign over Israel. And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer, for two talents of silver, and built on the hill and called the name of the city which he built after the name of the owner of the hill, Samaria." It became the rival of Jerusalem, and was the capital of the kingdom of Israel. From here the captives were carried away into Assyria by the rivers of waters. Later it was a Roman province, and one of the most profitable in its revenues to Herod, a rich grain growing country, and the scene of much military activity, political conspiracy and rebellion, religious apostacy, official corruption, crime and social depravity.

After the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, the Samaritans professed to worship Jehovah and claimed the rights and glory that belonged to the people of God, and ultimately Samaria swallowed most of Israel, and the word Samaritan became commonly used to distinguish the descendants of the other tribes from those of Judea and Benjamin. Many learned authorities repudiated their title to Israelitish ancestry, maintaining that the entire Israelitish population was carried away captive from Samaria by the kings of Assyria, and that few of them ever returned. There was always bitter animosity between them and the Jews, but the inhabitants of the city of Samaria claim to

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be descended from Joseph the wisest and most famous of the twelve sons of Jacob, and gloried in their ancestry.

"Art thou greater than our father Jacob?" asked the woman of Jesus at the well.

The incidents of the sojourn of the Savior in Samaria indicate that the ancient hatred was in full flame at His time. "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans," said the woman, and James and John proposed to command "fire to come down from heaven and consume them," because the people denied ordinary hospitality to the Lord and His disciples when they were passing through the province of Jerusalem; but Jesus rebuked them. He always treated the Samaritans with respect and cordiality, and although at first, when He sent His disciples out upon their ministry, He admonished them not to enter any city of the Samaritans, it was probably because He feared they would not be well received. He changed His policy soon after. He visited and preached to the Samaritans, and the apostles received many of them into Christian fellowship. But for its crime and corruption "the wrath of God" was directed against the ancient city. "Therefore will I make Samaria as a heap of the field. . . . And I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley."

That prophecy has been fulfilled. Everything is in ruins. The summit and the slopes of the noble hill upon which the city stood, the valleys that surround it, the olive groves, the wheat fields and vineyards are littered with the rubbish of walls that have crumbled, of fortifications that have fallen and towers that have been overthrown. Pompey restored the city at great expense. Augustus Caesar gave it his imperial favor.



Herod the Great called it Sebaste and adorned it with splendid public buildings, palaces, temples, fountains, baths, theaters, stadiums and colonnades, but all these have disappeared and in the world's progress the proud capital has dwindled to an insignificant village of shepherds, who do not fill half the mud huts of which it is composed.

In the seventeenth century interest in Samaria was revived by the discovery of a manuscript copy of the Pentateuch, which was found to vary in some important particulars from the text generally accepted by the Jews. For a time there was an animated controversy among Oriental scholars and Biblical critics, but there were no important results. The Samaritans assert that it was written by a grandson of Aaron, but the keenest experts locate its origin shortly after the Christian era began. The manuscript is a roll about fifteen inches wide, upon a silver rod, and is kept in a costly silver case, with a cover of green Venetian velvet. This is wrapped in an embroidered scarf of crimson satin, which is removed with great reverence when the manuscript is about to be shown to visitors. The silver case is adorned with high relief representing scenes that occurred in the tabernacle in the ancient days. Visitors are allowed to see a Codex upon the payment of a fee of 2 francs, but they may be sure that it is not the genuine one. A copy is kept in a duplicate case for that purpose.

The Jews of Jerusalem reject this manuscript with scorn and still deny to the Samaritans the honor of relationship. They condemn the rites practiced by the Jews of Samaria as pagan, and declare those who practice them aliens in blood, in language and in creed, and outcasts from the tribes of Israel. The



Samaritans, on the contrary, ridicule the Jerusalem Jews as narrow bigots. The Samaritan Jews have been reduced to a very small colony, and now number only about 170. They are the oldest and the smallest sect in the world, and are distinguished by their noble physiognomy and dignified appearance and their long prayers. Their creed is a monotheism. They abhor all images, pictures and symbols of worship and forbid human attributes to be ascribed to God.

They look for the appearance of the Messiah six thousand years after the creation of the world, which, according to their reckoning, will come toward the end of the next century, but they are diminishing fast, and as they will not marry outside their own community, it is scarcely probable that any of them will remain for the advent. Bigamy is permitted if the first wife is childless, and when a married man dies his nearest relation excepting his brothers is bound to marry the widow. Each young man is expected to marry his next of kin, sisters and members of the same family excepted. This intermarriage among relatives has so diluted the blood that the gradual extinction of the race is accounted for.

Their literature consists of their famous Pentateuch and prayers and hymns, their oldest chronicles in manuscript date from the captivity; they celebrate all the festivals of Moses and offer sacrifices at the Passover. At the Feast of Tabernacles they make a pilgrimage to the top of Mount Gerizim, the oldest sanctuary in the world. Probably at no other locality has the same worship been sustained with so little change or interruption for so many centuries, from the time of Abraham until the present day. They have an humble synagogue at the foot of the mountain, and

there, upon the feast of the tabernacle, they meet, prostrate themselves before their precious copy of the Pentateuch and bow their heads, not in the direction of Jerusalem, but toward the eastern summit of Gerizim. Then they form a procession in the order of their rank and pass slowly up the pathway to the top of the mountain, where they alone of all the Jewish race celebrate the pascal sacrifice of seven white lambs. Their prayers are repeated in the Samaritan dialect. The men wear surplices and red turbans. The office of the high priest is hereditary, and Yakob, the present incumbent, is a descendant of the tribe of Levi. His ecclesiastical rank makes him the temporal as well as the spiritual head of the community, and according to the Mosaic law, his parishioners pay him one-tenth of all their income and their earnings and their harvest.

Mount Gerizim is believed by the Samaritans to be the scene of Abraham's sacrifice and of his meeting with Melchizedek. It is known in the Bible as Ar-Gerizim, the Mountain of the Most High, and although the Greek and the Latin churches claim other sites, the best authorities, including Dr. Thompson, Dean Stanley and representatives of the Palestine Exploration Society, locate those two events there. "Beyond all doubt," Dean Stanley says, "Isaac was offered on Gerizim, and the Samaritans show an ancient thorn tree, covered with the rags of pilgrims, as the site of the thicket in which the ram was caught."

The Holy Place of the Samaritans is on the eastern extremity, where there is a large stone upon which the lamb is roasted upon the evening of the Passover. Near by are the remains of an ancient Samaritan temple. In one of the towers is the tomb of a Mussulman



saint. Under the southern wall is a line of rocky slabs called "the ten stones," said to have been brought there by Joshua and the ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel; Judah and Benjamin not being represented. They were formerly arranged in a platform and were used as an altar, and the Samaritans believe that they mark not only the spot of Abraham's sacrifice, but the Bethel of Jacob and the place where the ark rested.

There is a large reservoir on the top of the mountain, several smaller cisterns, and paved terraces. The whole surface indicates that the summit was once pretty well covered with buildings, but the Samaritans have the place practically to themselves these days.

At the mouth of the Valley of Shechem stands a white Mussulman chapel and a pile of broken stone. The first covers the alleged tomb of Joseph, who was buried in the "parcel of ground" which Jacob bequeathed to his favorite son. The pile of rocks marks the undisputed site of the well which Jacob digged "to mark his first possession" and "to give drink thereof to himself, his children and his cattle." Two chapels are shown as the tomb of Joseph, but nobody questions the authenticity of the well. It was there, on the edge of a little village called Belata, that Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for a drink of water.

The tomb of Joseph resembles an ordinary grave of an eminent Moslem, and it is held in reverence by Jew and Gentile, Christian and Moslem. There are Hebrew, Samaritan and Arabic inscriptions upon the walls, but they are apparently modern and have no importance. Niches in the walls are provided for small lamps, which are lighted on feast days, but the entire building is in a dilapidated condition and a dis-



grace to the country. When Joseph was about to die in his regal palace on the Nile he gave a strict commandment concerning his bones. He even "took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry my bones up from thence," and it is the tradition that the Israelites carried the mummy of Joseph through all the forty years of wandering in the wilderness and finally laid it here.

The well is a pit about sixty feet deep, covered with a confused mass of rubbish, and the surroundings are overgrown with weeds and nettles. It was formerly covered by a church, the foundations of which can be distinctly traced. The church is mentioned by St. Jerome in the fourth and Arculphus in the seventh century, and was still standing during the crusades. The walls were as high as the head of a man when the place was first visited by Protestant missionaries, seventy-five years ago, but they are now pretty well effaced. There is a decided difference in the statements of various authorities as to the depth of the well, which is doubtless due to the rubbish that has been thrown into it. It is now in possession of the Greek monks, who are responsible for its bad condition.

Nablus is the wealthiest, the most populous and the most important commercial city in the Holy Land between Damascus and Jerusalem, and is particularly interesting to us because it stands upon the farm which Jacob bought of the "children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of money," after he escaped from his crafty and selfish father-in-law and had entered Canaan to set up a home for himself. Hence it is one of the oldest of human settlements and one of the most beautiful spots in Palestine, which is due to the abundant supply of water in that locality.

There are at least twenty-seven springs in the immediate vicinity of Shechem, each having its peculiar name. There are also a number of smaller springs without names, which pour their precious overflow into the valley to moisten the fields and the orchards and endow the soil with life. One does not appreciate the value of water until he has visited those desert lands.

But we hear of Shechem before Jacob's time, and it is possible that he may have taken his wives and led his flocks there because of a knowledge of its advantages gained from his grandfather, Abraham, for the latter, in the earliest dawn of what is termed the patriarchal age, halted at these same springs after he had crossed the Jordan on his way from Chaldea "to the land which God should give him." It was there also, between two low peaks called Ebal and Gerizim, that Moses commanded the law to be proclaimed anew, so that Gerizim has since been a second Sinai, "a mount of God." Here Joshua called the tribes together in his old age, and the great captain told Israel that they must "choose ye this day whom ye will serve." The city had been given to the Levites, the tribe of priests, who made it a sanctuary, and it became the meeting place of national assemblies. Even after Jerusalem was erected for the capital the custom was still preserved and the kings of Israel for centuries were crowned at Shechem. It was a holy place five hundred years before Jerusalem was thought of, and until the dispersion of the tribes was considered the city of Joshua and the judges, as Jerusalem was the city of David and the kings.

The term Nablus is a corruption of Neapolis, and has been attached to the city since the Roman occupation,



the legal title being Flavia Neapolis, so called to commemorate its restoration by Titus Flavius Vespasianus.

Nablus is about nineteen hundred feet above the level of the sea and lies in the center of a long plain with about 25,000 inhabitants, nearly all Moslems. There are perhaps 1,000 Christians, including 150 Protestants. The Church of England Mission maintains a church, a school and a hospital; the Franciscans have a church and a monastery, and the Greeks a church and a school. The Moslems have eight large mosques, and among them are the finest in Palestine. That known as the Jami en-Nasr, or green mosque, is said to occupy the identical spot where Jacob stood when his sons brought him the tattered and bloody coat of Joseph. It was originally a Christian church erected by the Templars before such a story was developed. Another mosque stands over what is claimed to be the tomb of several of Jacob's sons and daughters, but all these legends are modern and have been invented for the purpose of attracting interest to these places of Mohammedan worship.

Nablus has had no history since the patriarchal age, and to-day is a commonplace but busy and prosperous town, the largest industry being the manufacture of soap, although from appearances very little of it is used by the people. The largest buildings in town are soap factories, and they are twenty in number. The soap is sent by camel trains to Jaffa and Beirut, and from there exported to Europe. The finer qualities of oil are shipped in goat or pig skins to Cairo, Alexandria, Constantinople and other parts of the Levant. Olive and other fruit trees grow to an enormous size, owing to the abundance of water, and are more prolific in bearing than elsewhere.



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Nablus is the market for a wide agricultural district embracing several of the most fertile valleys and plains in Palestine and the best streams for irrigation. The transactions in fruit, grain, wool, sheep and cattle amount annually to a large sum. There is more business and more profitable industrial activity there than in any other town of the same size in the country. The fact that the place is without religious shrines and monasteries is favorable to commercial enterprise, because the people cannot live upon tourists and pilgrims as they do elsewhere. It is a decided drawback to the prosperity and progress of a place when the inhabitants devote themselves entirely to the business of robbing travelers.

Although Nablus is essentially a Moslem town, several of the wealthiest and largest traders are Jews, who are allowed to live in peace and pursue the avocations in which they always engage successfully when they are not interfered with. During the Civil War in the United States the farmers around Nablus engaged in cotton growing on a large scale, and for ten or fifteen years, in the '60s and early '70s, their undertakings were very profitable. Several large fortunes were made by Greek and Jewish merchants and speculators, but owing to the revival of American competition the industry has languished.

If Nablus could have the benefit of a railway its importance would be greatly increased. Its natural position, the fertility of the surrounding country, the abundant supply of water for agricultural and mechanical purposes, and its attractive climate would bring in immigrants and capital; and, strange to say, it is one of the few places in Palestine which seems to have a good government. Although the people are prosper-

ous and save large sums of money, they have not suffered to any extent from the blackmailing tendencies of the Turkish authorities elsewhere. At least they make no complaint, and the external evidences are favorable.

The landscape is rather tame, but attractive. The roads are atrocious, but only foreigners suffer. The patient earth has given forth its substance for thousands and thousands of years of uninterrupted cultivation; the olive groves and the vines upon the terraced hillsides never fail to furnish oil and wine, no matter how wicked and depraved their owners; the bubbling springs and the roaring brooks continue to turn the ancient millstones, and groups of young men and girls make merry while waiting for their grist to be ground. Enormous flocks of sheep and goats browse among the neighboring ruins, unconscious of their interest to Biblical students and sentimental people, but the inhabitants are exceptionally independent in spirit, lawless in behavior and vicious of disposition. Tourists are warned not to engage in conversation with natives, and to beware of hotel-keepers and strangers who try to pick up an acquaintance; and the guide books notify everybody that he must not straggle from the procession while traveling through that part of the country. We noticed that every person we saw in the fields or met on the highway carried knives and a gun. The men at the mills and in the markets were heavily armed. "The sheiks of Nablus and its neighborhood are all robbers," says a well-known writer; "their women are pretty but deceitful and the peasants are insolent, quarrelsome and dangerous."

The houses of Nablus are solidly built of stone,



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inclosing courts upon which doors and windows open, while the outside walls are unbroken except for a single entrance which is used alike by man and beast and is protected by heavy doors and bars, which are unknown and unnecessary in other parts of Palestine. The streets are narrow, crooked, dark and dirty. The pavements are worse than those of Constantinople or Damascus, and they are always crowded with men and women who seem to be in a hurry, and with caravans of camels and donkeys which are not respecters of persons. The camels are especially impertinent, and, like the inhabitants, are always trying to pick up a row. When they see a stranger they take delight in crowding him off the highway into some mudhole, and when they catch him in one of the narrow streets they jam him up against the wall. There is a good deal of depravity in the character of the camel.

The streets occupied by the bazaars are arched and vaulted over with stone or corrugated iron, which makes them dark, damp and gloomy, and there is no light except that which filters through an occasional hole pierced in the roof. The shops are well stocked with goods and trading seems to be brisk. Business is conveniently classified as in other Oriental cities, the dealers in the same lines of goods occupying adjoining stalls. The principal bazaar is declared to be the finest in Palestine, and may be so. It is a busy place and offers a striking contrast to the indolent atmosphere of other towns. From early morning until after sunset it is filled with the clamor of camel and donkey drivers, lemonade and sherbet sellers, peddlers of fruits and sweetmeats, disputing dealers in wool, hides and grain, who conduct their transactions with loud tones and impassioned gestures, and when you think



they are on the verge of a desperate quarrel they are only discussing the fluctuations in fleeces or grain.

They hustle you out of their way in the true Chicago style, without stopping to apologize. Collisions are often followed by angry controversies, indignant protests and ineffective blows, but the outbreak is only incidental, and the participants pass on their way without resentment. Some of the narrow streets are almost impassable at midday. As usual in such Eastern bazaars, Oriental goods are mixed with European merchandise. Silks from Damascus and Antioch occupy the same shelves with Manchester prints, Sheffield and Nuremburg cutlery with scimiters from Damascus and pipes and amber goods from Stamboul. Bohemian glass and Dresden china are exhibited side by side with beads and mother of pearl work from Bethlehem and Hebron.

Altogether Nablus is the liveliest, the most modern and the most noisy place in Palestine.

An hour's ride north of Nablus is Telldothan, where is believed to be the genuine pit into which the boy Joseph was cast by his envious brethren. If everything one hears is true, Joseph must have been cast into a good many pits, and they are all pointed out to tourists with the most serious vouchers of authenticity; but the most reliable and disinterested authorities seem to have demonstrated beyond a doubt that Telldothan was actually the scene of that extraordinary incident in Biblical history, which never fails to excite the interest and indignation of Sunday school boys. The wicked brethren are supposed to have been loafing around a big spring known as Ain el Hufireh, when they saw Joseph afar off. "And they said one to another: Behold the dreamer cometh. Come now,

therefore, let us slay him and cast him into the same pit"—and they did so. If you do not know the rest of the story and the consequences that followed the spitefulness of those young rascals, you can read it in Genesis xxxvii.

The Ishmaelites to whom they sold Joseph were carrying down to Egypt the balm of Gilead which is as well known now as it was four thousand years ago, and is gathered in large quantities in the forests on the mountains east of the Jordan. It is not a medicine, however, as is generally supposed. Perhaps that notion is due largely to the inquiry, "Is there no balm in Gilead?" That which is brought into the market of Nablus to-day is a gum mastic, known to botany as *Balsamum Gileadense*, and is used for making varnish and shellac. It is shipped to Egypt, to Constantinople and other neighboring ports, but the largest quantity goes to Italy and France.

XVII

The Jewish Colonies in Palestine





## XVII

### THE JEWISH COLONIES IN PALESTINE

For many years patriotic and philanthropic Jews throughout the world have been promoting a movement to recover and re-people the Holy Land with members of their own race and religion; to reassemble in the Promised Land all the living children of Israel, for it is the land that was given to their fathers by the Great Jehovah, in his covenant with Jacob. The practical element does not look upon the proposition with great favor, but it appeals very strongly to racial and religious sentiment, and its advocates are able to arouse much zeal and raise large amounts of money to advance it. Zionist conventions, or conferences, are held annually, to which delegates are invited from all Jewish communities in the world, and measures more or less practical are formulated and adopted. The recognized leader of the movement is Dr. Herzl, editor of the *Neue Freie Presse*, one of the newspapers of Vienna.

The individuality of the Jew is stronger than that of any other race, and he is prominent in certain fields of activity, but he has failed as a fighter and as a farmer, and that is one reason his children are scattered over the earth. In finance, in commerce, in industries of all kinds, in literature, art, music and various other lines of usefulness, the ability of the Jew cannot be denied. If any one doubts it let him read a book published by Mr. Strauss of New York upon the achievements of the Jewish people, or let him ride up

Broadway, New York City, and look at the sign boards upon the buildings.

The finances, the newspapers, the railways, the great industries of Europe, are largely controlled by Jews, where their power is even greater than in the United States, yet they were elbowed out of Palestine, the land which the Lord God said should be theirs forever and ever. Because they were poor sailors they lost the coast; because they were poor farmers they lost the fertile fields; because they were poor horsemen they lost the pastures and were compelled to confine their activity to the narrow streets of the towns. Those hardy seamen, the Phoenicians, got the commerce; the Syrians and Greeks the farms, and the herds and flocks belong to the sons of Ishmael and Esau, who still dwell in black tents of camel's hair. These rival races seldom mix. They never intermarried; they could not live together, but kept their own lines and their own trades. The same rules and conditions prevail to-day. The Jews, the Assyrians, the Arabs, the Armenians, the Turks, the Maronites, the Druses, each keep their own language, their own customs and habits and their own dress as tenaciously as their own religion. Each worships his own god.

Palestine is first a pastoral and next an agricultural country. The most valuable staple is wool; after that wheat, hides and skins, oil and wine. There is no fuel and no water power, hence there can be no extensive manufacturing, and consequently a limited mercantile business. A considerable portion of the land,—estimates vary between 45 and 62 per cent, is unproductive, fit only for grazing, and a Texas ranchman, who has been over the country, estimates that over there ten acres of pasture are needed for every sheep.



Palestine is a small country, not more than 150 miles in length from Dan to Beersheba, and has an average breadth of not more than fifty miles. The area of all Syria, including Palestine, is officially calculated at 108,000 square miles, and the population is between 3,000,000 and 3,500,000, which gives about thirty inhabitants to the square mile, or about the same density of population as the State of Mississippi. New York State has 122, and Great Britain 309 to the square mile.

Thus it becomes a question of mathematics.

The area of Palestine alone is estimated at 10,500 square miles and the population 650,000, or about sixty-two persons to the square mile, which is very small compared with the European countries, and is certainly much less than the country can support. Its productiveness could be increased many fold by the introduction of modern methods and labor-saving machinery. The land is not half tilled and the flocks are not half kept. At the same time it must be remembered that nearly all of the Hebrew inheritance east of the Jordan is a useless desert, and the area west of the Jordan capable of sustaining human life does not exceed 7,000 square miles.

According to the census taken by Moses the total number of the nine and a half tribes which passed over Jordan to occupy the area mentioned was about 2,000,000. There are now about 7,500,000 Jews alive. At the most prosperous period of the Hebrew nation the population is supposed to have been about 3,500,000, hence the advocates of Zionism argue that the country is capable of supporting that number of people. They forget, however, that the Hebrews in olden times lived upon far less than is required by the people of the

present day. Each raised the sustenance of his own family; their clothing was made from the wool of their own flocks; their habitations were rude and cost but little labor and less money; they had no furniture; their household equipments were home-made; the entire family lived and slept in a single room on the mud floor with few changes of clothing.

But even if there were room for the 7,500,000 Jews of to-day in Palestine, what inducements could coax those who are successful and contented elsewhere into a dreary and lonesome country, without amusements, art, culture or opportunities for business, and what are they to do when they get there? And, assuming that they would go, how are they going to get possession of the country? Who will crowd out the fierce Arabs and persuade them to sell their land, and where will they go, and the Syrians and the Greeks, who will also be displaced? Who will stay the hands of the Druses and Maronites? They hate the Jews more than any other sect, and are the most fanatical of all the believers in Christ. The Jews get along better with the Moslems than with any other of their neighbors. They are favored by the sultan and have his confidence. He says that he was never injured by a Jew, but is not well disposed toward the idea of Jewish colonization. He claims that he is, but will not do anything practical to encourage it. He invites Mr. Herzl to Constantinople and treats him with great distinction, but never signs a firman or issues an order to promote the Zionist movement or to protect the Jews who are already in Palestine against the rapacity of his officials. No Jew can buy an acre of land in Palestine to-day. No Jew can build a house there.

Furthermore, the Jewish people in Palestine are not



united. There is no solidarity among them. They are divided into bitter factions, and hate each other more vigorously than they hate Christians or Moslems. One-half of them call the other half impostors and worse than apostates.

One of the highest Jewish authorities in Palestine told me that at least 35 per cent of his religionists in that country to-day are subsisting directly or indirectly upon charity and at least 20 per cent are absolutely dependent upon foreign benevolence. About one-half of them have sought there an asylum from persecution. They have fled from Poland, Russia and Roumania. The remainder are aged and infirm persons who seek a grave in the sacred soil. They go there to die. The Mount of Olives is covered with cemeteries, and the slopes of the hill upon which Jerusalem is built are occupied by neglected graves. Quite a number of Jewish scholars go there to study. Others are attracted by sentiment but the largest number because they know they will be supported by charity.

Twenty years ago or more Baron Edmond Rothschild of Paris, who, as a practical man, does not thoroughly sympathize with the Zionist movement, undertook at his own expense to try an extensive experiment to demonstrate the problem. He purchased large tracts of land in different parts of Palestine and settled upon them some twenty or more colonies, with about 10,000 Jews from Roumania, Poland and other parts of Europe. The experiment has cost him at least \$10,000,000, and he admits that it is a failure. He has abandoned this vast scheme of philanthropy, transferred all of the land and other property to the Jewish Colonization Society of London, and has given it \$10,000,000 more to carry on the work.



The failure of the colonies is attributed both to the inability and the unwillingness of the people to till the soil. They can work with their minds, but not with their muscles, and while there have been exceptions, while many families have gone earnestly at work to earn their own living and make the movement a success, the great majority of the beneficiaries have been indifferent, indolent, neglectful and mischievous. Those who have been interested in watching the experiment differ in opinion as to the extent and the causes of the failure, according to their point of view. Some contend that it is the fault of Baron Rothschild, because he "pauperized" his proteges from the beginning. He brought them there at his own expense instead of compelling them to pay their way; he built villages of the best and most expensive class of houses in Palestine, which the poor Jews who have lived in tenement houses in the slums of European cities could not appreciate; he beautified their surroundings in a manner to which they were not accustomed; he provided them with neat and artistic furniture, luxurious beds and all the comforts and conveniences of modern civilization. It was something they could not understand. Then, as a climax, he gave each individual over twelve years of age thirty-two cents a day, thus enabling them to live without working, which is the easiest and surest way to make paupers.

They remained in their villages trading jack-knives and engaging in other petty mercantile transactions and theological disputes, and hired Arabs to work for them. Of course, as long as the munificence of Baron Rothschild continued, they were willing to accept his generosity. Hence they had no incentive to work. Whereas, these critics say, if they had been

compelled to work for their living from the beginning under conditions to which they were accustomed and could appreciate, they would have succeeded

The colonization society has adopted a different plan. It allots land to each family in parcels large enough to support them, lends each farmer \$1,000 or a proportionate sum, according to his needs, for eight or ten years at a low rate of interest. It makes him pay for his seed, for his implements, for his house and for all the supplies that are advanced to him, and he now gets nothing whatever unless he earns it. As a consequence the colonies are disintegrating. Those who can raise the money are going to Egypt, South Africa, Australia, South America and the United States, and the ungrateful kickers are denouncing their benefactors in unmeasured terms. The directors of the colonization society come in for a large share of the abuse, and altogether the present condition at the Jewish colonies is unhappy.

Renewing our acquaintance with the carriage used by the Kaiser of Germany in his trip through Palestine, hauled by three horses harnessed abreast, with the faithful John at the helm, we set out for the Jewish colony of Sammarin, twenty miles south of Haifa, which was founded by Baron Edmond Rothschild of Paris in 1883. The twenty Rothschild colonies, situated in various parts of Palestine, are under the general management of Mr. Schtarknet, who was there making an inspection, with a committee from the Jewish Colonization Society of London. The local director at Sammarin is a Mr. Bescop, an intelligent, progressive, earnest man, zealous for the well-being of his co-religionists, but rather discouraged over his failure to make farmers out of men who have neither the taste nor the strength for such work.



Sammarin is reached by a half-day's drive from Haifa, following the coast line over a road that was built by Herod the Great and repaired for the benefit of the German kaiser. It is dotted on either side with ruins of the Herodian era, empty tombs and cisterns, blocks of marble, granite and other building stones, fragments of pillars and cornices, scattered here and there in the fields, with occasionally a wretched Arab village wherever there is a spring. Upon the coast of the sea, about halfway down is a large building which was erected by Baron Rothschild for a glass factory to utilize the labor of colonists who would not work on the farms, and the vitreous sand which lies along the beach, but it was a poor business proposition and did not succeed. There is very little demand for glass in Palestine. The native cabins have no windows, and in the cities and towns the outside walls are blank and the rooms open upon an inner court, so that glass is not always necessary. There was no other market for the product of the factory without paying excessive freight to Europe, so the enterprise was abandoned.

We passed through a succession of well-tilled farms and growing vineyards, which show that somebody about the the Jewish colony has industry and skill in agriculture, and that there are exceptions to the rule. We climbed a long, stony hill to the top of a high plateau, passing an immense wine factory, where the grapes from the vineyards of the colony are crushed and produce about 150,000 gallons of wine a year, which is shipped to Egypt and Germany; then entered the best looking town I have ever seen in Palestine, excepting the German colony at Haifa. It looks like a factory town, only the houses are more substantial than those usually built for workingmen. Their walls



are of white stone, neatly cut and dressed, and their roofs of red tiles. The houses are double, with accommodations for two families, and are detached and surrounded by fences and kitchen gardens. A few of the gardens were neatly kept. The most of them were running to weeds and showed long neglect. The company's building, which stands in the center of the town, is a large and imposing structure, there is an assembly hall, a synagogue of some architectural pretensions, two school-houses, a market and a company's store, like those you see in manufacturing towns or in the mining regions of the West, with a miscellaneous stock of goods, including everything from agricultural implements to flea powder; and the latter is an urgent necessity. As we drove into town in the twilight the streets were filled with men and women, promenading, standing around in groups, gossiping with each other, while the children were screaming at their games.

The hotel was a most uninviting place. The building was substantial and even expensive, and of attractive design, but the interior was repulsive, and was filled with a lot of loafers. One of them, who talked English, told me that he had recently come from Australia and would be glad if I could refer him to some one who would assist him to reach the United States. The rooms were good and the beds were originally comfortable, but we had them made over under our own eyes, and as the dining-room was not very appetizing and was crowded by the curious, we persuaded the landlord by a judicious use of baksheesh to let us have our supper in the parlor, which, compared with the rest of the house, was a clean and palatial apartment.

After having examined the culinary department we concluded to provide our own supper and started out

into the town to skirmish for supplies. We got some good potatoes and eggs, which we boiled with the skins and shells on so that they could not be polluted, sardines, excellent canned German asparagus, figs, cheese and a box of Albert biscuits which evidently had been bequeathed by the ancestors of the present storekeeper, and were considerably shelf worn. As we carry our own tea outfit, and the landlord furnished plates, cups, knives, forks, spoons, salt and pepper, we fared well. It was one of the best meals we had in Palestine, and we knew that it was clean.

The appearance of things at Sammarin suggests that Baron Rothschild overdid himself and pampered his colonists too much. The houses are too fine for such a purpose. They are not suitable for farmers and are so much better than anything in the villages around as to furnish a disagreeable contrast. The colonists are generally discontented. Some who could scrape together sufficient money have gone away, and quite a number of the houses are empty. Others who still remain, unable to secure funds to pay their passage to any other place, are occupying their time abusing the management, while all of them are opposed to the Zionist movement, of which they are a part, because they say there are too many Jews in Palestine already.

From the heights of Sammarin the plain of Sharon stretches out from the sea to the mountains of Samaria in one direction and to those of Judea in the other. It is beautiful, diversified and broken by little ridges upon which the villages of the farmers stand, and way up toward the top of several rocky peaks we could see groups of white cabins nestling against the cliffs. We did not find any lilies of the valley, but the rose of



Sharon climbs over the dead walls and rocks. It is the ordinary single four-petal pink rose that we are accustomed to, and is generally called a sweetbrier.

Although the road was repaired for the German emperor in 1898, it has been neglected since, and bridges built only five years ago are so badly dilapidated that our driver had to take wide circuits to avoid them. They actually make the roads worse instead of better, and the sand is so heavy for most of the distance that we had to alight to relieve the horses, and were compelled to walk a considerable part of the distance to Jaffa, like the boy who wanted to work his passage on a canal boat and was allowed to drive the team. It is a curious phenomenon that the sandy beach is gradually encroaching upon the cultivated area. The sea is wearing away the underlying rock, and the new-made sand, with that washed up from the bottom of the Mediterranean, is driven farther and farther inland every year, so that if the process goes on long enough the entire plain of Sharon will be buried under a slowly creeping desert. When the brooks which cross the plain run dry in the summer the sand dams up their mouths so that when the rainy season comes they flood the country and form marshes, which become permanent, and they are also encroaching gradually upon the fields.

Three hours from Sammarin we came to the famous City of Cæsarea, erected by Herod the Great, with magnificent palaces, fortresses, temples and other public buildings, which became the most popular of all the cities in Palestine and its most important port during the Roman occupation. It does not speak well for Herod's judgment as a town site locator, for it stands upon the open coast without a harbor or protection of



any kind. Several ledges run out from the shore into the sea, and Herod took advantage of two of them to construct a harbor, the remains of which are still apparent, but it was not large enough to protect a single steamer of the present day. The moles were only 250 yards long and about 150 yards apart. Herod christened them with great ceremony, and named them Propymatia—wave breakers.

Large blocks of granite are still to be seen under the water, and the ruins of a medieval castle are still quite imposing, although they are crumbling rapidly and growing less conspicuous every year. The walls of the city described a rectangle. They were eight feet thick, with towers at intervals of thirty yards, and were inclosed by a moat lined with masonry and about forty feet wide, all of which is still apparent, as are the ruins of a temple which Herod erected for the worship of Augustus Caesar. About twenty years ago a colony of Bosnians settled among the ruins, and, being men of energy and enterprise, have used them as a quarry, and have cut out immense quantities of building material, which they have shipped on little steamers to the towns up and down the coast.

At the height of its greatness Cæsarea is believed to have had 300,000 population, and judging by present appearances, the estimate is well based, for the citadel covers an area of 370 acres, the amphitheater accommodated 20,000 spectators, and there are remains of two aqueducts which brought from the mountains sufficient water to supply a large population. Paul, the apostle, visited Cæsarea several times, and was held a prisoner there for two years, during that time making some of his ablest speeches before Felix, Festus, Agrippa and other Roman officials.

Cæsarea was also the residence of the pious Cornelius, who fasted, prayed and gave alms until an angel from the Lord appeared and advised him to send to Jaffa for "Simon, whose surname is Peter." At Cæsarea began the war which ruined the Jewish nation and ended with the destruction of Jerusalem. By erecting heathen temples and theaters the Roman authorities enraged the Jews, who, exasperated, became violent and revolted. As a penalty 20,000 Jewish citizens of Cæsarea were massacred, whereupon the entire nation joined in a rebellion which devastated the entire country and left them little but their traditions and their name.

A few miles south of Cæsarea is another Jewish philanthropic colony called Sira, and a little farther away a third, called Nechbara. Both are almost duplicates of Sammarin, with the same neat, substantial houses, with red-tiled roofs and gardens, and both have suffered the same failure, because of the inability of the colonists to become agriculturists. Their farms, however, so far as they go, are well kept and apparently productive, and it would seem as if anything would grow upon the Plain of Sharon, which has been famous for its fertility since the days of Isaiah. The soil is several feet deep in the lowlands, water is found everywhere by digging, and the slopes of the ridges and little hills that arise here and there upon the plain are covered with the richest of forage.

Arabs were plowing with teams of little black steers, and were working in the fields, as you have seen them in the pictures in the big illustrated Bibles. Occasionally we passed a group of Bedouin tents with flat tops and walls woven of camel's hair, and a horseman met us now and then, heavily armed. The road used to be

dangerous. Travelers were killed and robbed by Bedouins, and escorts were necessary, but now the road is perfectly safe. We saw the little village of Elmacka, one of the seven places where Samson was born, and took our luncheon at a table in the open air beside a mill which is conducted by a Russian miller from near Odessa, whose wife complains of lonesomeness.

Just beyond this mill, between it and Jaffa, was the scene of a great battle between the Crusaders under Richard Cœur de Lion and the Saracens under Saladin, which began Sept. 7, 1191, and continued for six days, with terrible loss of life on both sides. Many of the Crusaders, not being accustomed to the climate, perished from thirst and heat. Cæsarea was the scene of many exciting incidents during the crusade, and it was there that the Knights of the Round Table finally discovered the Holy Grail—the sacred cup used by Christ and His disciples at the last supper.



XVIII

From Jaffa to Jerusalem









THE HOUSE OF SIMON THE TANNER.



## XVIII

### FROM JAFFA TO JERUSALEM

Jaffa is a queer old place, full of legends and bad smells, surrounded by the most beautiful orange groves in Palestine and associated with some of the most interesting events in the world's history. Jaffa is the port from which Jonah started upon his memorable voyage when he was swallowed by the whale. It was here, according to the ancient myth, that Andromeda, the beautiful daughter of Æolus, was chained to the rocks in order that she might be devoured by a huge sea monster, but was rescued by Perseus; here Peter raised from the dead Tabitha, "which by interpretation is called Dorcas," a "woman full of good work and alms deeds which she did." Here Peter "tarried many days with one Simon, a tanner, and went upon his housetop to pray about the sixth hour," and he was very hungry. While Simon's folks were fixing him some lunch he fell into a trance, "and saw the heavens opened and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet, knit at the four corners and let down to the earth, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, wild beasts and creeping things and fowls of the air." While this was going on three men rapped at the door and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, lodged there. You will remember the rest of the story, for it was the beginning of Peter's missionary work, which is recorded in detail in the Book of Acts. He was an active itinerant missionary.

And as if all this were not enough for one place, Jaffa has one lighthouse, one railway station, four different postoffices, maintained by the Austrian, French and Russian governments, in addition to the Turkish office, because foreigners dare not trust their letters to the regular mails; seven consuls, three doctors, five mosques, three churches, three monasteries, four cemeteries, two hospitals, an old fort, innumerable cafes, a mission to the Jews with two converts, who are the most remarkable curiosities in the town; several soap factories and four hotels. At one of the hotels, which is kept by the American consular agent, travelers are offered "evangelical cleanliness" and "Biblical comfort," and the proprietor, a German Lutheran whose name is Hardegg, has adopted a choice specimen of "hen fruit" for his coat of arms with the motto, "Eat, eat, oh! friends; drink; yea, drink; drink abundantly, oh! beloved," and this is no idle invitation, for Mr. Hardegg puts up a first-class meal cooked in the German style, and there is always plenty of it. The garden bears fresh vegetables all the year around. The hotel is as clean and comfortable as any in Dresden or Nuremburg, with a homelike air, and, in addition to the ordinary bill of fare, Mr. Hardegg supplies each guest with a "case of gospel pills," which promote health and happiness, aid digestion, cure sleeplessness and stimulate both the body and the soul. His gospel pills are in the form of a handsomely printed little book containing texts from the Scriptures applicable to daily life. Instead of numbering his rooms, Mr. Hardegg has named them after the sons of Israel and other Old Testament characters, and there it is actually possible for a guest to sleep in Abraham's bosom or use Joshua for a sitting-room.



Jaffa is a city of the most ancient type, and the primitive customs of the patriarchal age and the most modern improvements are brought together there in striking contrast. At the market place one can see the genuine East, a combination of Oriental features and colors, from sunrise to sunset, with a crowd of people chattering at each other in all the languages of Asia Minor. Country peasants, foreign pilgrims, Bedouins, Arabs, Syrians, Egyptians, Turks and Jews, mixed up with camels, mules, donkeys, goats, buffaloes, cows, oxen, dogs, parrots, ducks, geese, hens and chickens, all talking or screaming or braying at the same time, each trying to attract attention to himself or the wares he has for sale. Every product of that semi-tropical region; every fabric made by Oriental hands, luscious fruits from the orchards in the neighborhood, lemons, oranges, pomegranates, quinces, apples, apricots, strawberries, every variety of vegetables, and cheese, poultry and eggs, figs and olives, olive oil in pigskin bottles, and petroleum in tin cans; meat of all kinds, dried fish, everything that anybody wants or that can be produced or procured in that country, is spread out upon the ground, either with an old woman or a young one trying to persuade people to buy, and screaming at them at the top of her voice.

It is a novel and interesting sight. The outdoor market of Jaffa furnishes as fascinating a picture as an artist can find anywhere in the East. Jaffa is famous for her gardens. They extend around the city in a belt about seven miles long and a mile and a half wide, produce two or three crops a year, and have been producing since shortly after Noah's ark landed on Ararat. Indeed, one of the legends is that Jaffa was not destroyed like the rest of the world or even injured

by the flood. I cannot quite make out how it escaped, but plenty of old Moslem moulahs will explain the phenomenon if you will go over there and listen to them. The soil seems to be inexhaustible, and an artesian basin under the city is a never-failing supply of water, which is pumped by curious old wheels into distributing reservoirs for irrigating purposes.

The list of modern fruits is very much longer than that of the Bible. Many delicious fruits, berries, nuts and vegetables raised there nowadays were unknown to the ancients and have been introduced from foreign lands.

The best fruits and garden truck come from the German colony of Sarona, which is located on the outskirts of Jaffa, and almost buried in the wilderness of fruit trees and berry bushes. The colonists are members of the Temple Society, the same organization that established the colony I wrote about at Haifa. The American members come mostly from Buffalo and Schenectady, but the great majority are from Wurtemberg. They have been wonderfully successful in everything they have undertaken and are entitled to all the prosperity they enjoy, for there, in one of the oldest groups of human habitations and in one of the most depraved of all communities, they are furnishing a permanent example of industry, sobriety, good morals and honorable business methods,—an example that cannot be lost or wasted.

Jaffa may have survived the flood, but it has been destroyed utterly and many times by Jews, Greeks, Romans, Assyrians, Egyptians and Turks from the days of the Pharaohs to those of Louis Napoleon of France. Pompey, Richard Cœur de Lion, Alexander the Great, Saladin, Rameses II. and Napoleon Bona-



parte have besieged and defended it alternately, and not far away is the old home of Samson, who, you may remember, was a good deal of a fighter himself.

Jaffa has prospered in modern times as much as any city in Palestine, which is largely due to the railway connecting it with Jerusalem and making it profitable to ship produce through its merchants. It has now about 40,000 inhabitants, of whom at least 25,000 are Mohammedans and 8,000 are Jews. Its imports and exports roll up into the millions, and it might do a much larger business if it had a harbor, but there are no docks, quays or jetties, and the landing is the most dangerous on the coast. A few hundred feet from the shore is a ledge of rocks which here and there crop up out of the water when it is calm, but are entirely submerged whenever there is a heavy sea. Between them at two or three places are narrow gaps only a few feet wide and a few feet deep, which furnish a very uncertain passage for boats of light draft to get through, but the men who steer them have to be extremely careful not to sail too far on one side or the other or they will bump against the sharp ledges and rip open the sides of their boats. When there is wind enough to blow up the slightest commotion these perilous passages cannot be used, and, as no one can enter or leave the town by water without passing through them, Jaffa is in a state of blockade a good portion of the time, and its shipping business is limited to perfectly calm weather.

At all times steamers which visit the port are compelled to anchor a good ways out, a safe distance from the reef, and the Arab boatmen, who are very skillful and nervy, carry passengers and freight back and forth in boats and barges. If the captain of a steamer finds



upon arrival that it is too rough to land he does not drop his anchor, but continues his voyage to Port Said in one direction or to Beirut in the other, carrying his Jaffa passengers and freight with him, and then brings them back the first pleasant day; but sometimes passengers are kept out for weeks because the wind and the waves will not subside sufficiently to let them land. If the sultan would sell a few of the jewels that are hidden in the treasury of Seraglio Point at Constantinople and build a breakwater and blow out this ledge with dynamite it would be a great thing for the country.

But there used to be other dangers and difficulties in Jaffa in ancient times. A pious monk named Father Fabri, who made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem by way of Jaffa in the fifteenth century, tells of a fish called the troyp, which haunted this part of the coast, "with a beak fashioned like an auger, and unless he be driven away from the ship he bores through it. He cannot be forced away from the ship save by a fearless look, so that one should lean out of the ship over the water and unflinchingly look at him with a terrible gaze. If he who looks at the fish grows terrified and begins to turn his eyes away the beast straightway rises, snatches him down into the water and devours him, and then destroys the ship." Fortunately for American tourists these terrible monsters are all gone, and, as you know, Perseus here slew the dragon that was going to eat up the beautiful Andromeda. The rock to which Andromeda was chained may still be seen as confirmation of the story, but some of the particulars furnished by early writers are a little confusing. Pliny, the famous naturalist of imperial times, declares that the legend of Andromeda was confirmed by the bones of a

wild beast which were brought to Rome from Jaffa. The length of the bones was forty feet, the ribs were larger than those of an Indian elephant and the thickness of the skin was a foot and a half. This, however, may have been the same beast that swallowed Jonah.

Sir John Mandeville, writing in 1322, declares that "Joppo (Jaffa) is one of the oldest towns of the world, for it was founded before Noah's flood. And there may still be seen in the rock there the place where iron chains were fastened wherewith Andromeda, a great giant, was bound and put in prison before Noah's flood, a rib of whose side, which is forty feet long, is still shown."

Father Fabri, the same who wrote about the fearful fish, has something to say on this point also. He states that "the bones of that sea monster which Perseus slew were of vast size and are publicly on the beach over against the city. Some declare that these were the bones of the virgin giantess Andromeda, which seems impossible, because Perseus took Andromeda away with him into Persia and ended his days there, and we nowhere read of him coming back to Jaffa." So you see that the reports of this interesting affair are somewhat confusing, although any one who reads them must become convinced of the truth of the story and congratulate Perseus upon rescuing a young lady with ribs forty feet long.

The location of the house of Simon the tanner, where Peter "tarried many days," has been changed recently, and greatly to the convenience of tourists and pilgrims, who visit it in large numbers. It was formerly back in the fields in the southern part of the city, and could be reached only by a long walk or drive, but is now very near the landing place, so that



pilgrims can stop and climb to the roof where Peter saw that remarkable vision, pay their baksheesh to the owner and pass on to the railway station without losing any time. It is one of the most ridiculous humbugs in the Holy Land.

The tomb of Tabitha, however, is in a most attractive place in the garden of the monastery of the Greek monks and surrounded by beautiful palm groves, fruit orchards and gardens of flowers.

From the roof of the hotel you can see Lydda, or Lud, the town in which St. George, the patron saint of England, was born, and about which Richard of the Lion Heart pitched his tents so long during the crusade; Ramleh, a beautiful old town, where Joseph of Arimathea lived; Modin, the princely seat of Simon Maccabeus; Askalon, in which Herod the Great was born; Ashdod, one of the fortified seats of the Philistines, and Gaza, the home of Samson and the site of the temple of Dagon, which he pulled down. Among the hills and plains that surround Jaffa Samson performed his remarkable exploits, David fought with the giant Goliath, and many other of the most stirring incidents related in the early part of the Old Testament occurred. The landscape is a wide stretch of wheat fields, broken by many hills, and behind them in the extreme background is a range of blue, misty mountains which separate the Plain of Sharon from the holy city of Jerusalem. Here and there are groups of mud houses, clusters of black Bedouin tents and ruins which were the theater of the earliest activity of human kind, but many of them cannot even be identified. They and the people who lived in them have passed through the mist into oblivion, leaving nothing behind them but graves, which contain ashes of a hun-



dred generations of men,—Canaanites, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Ishmaelites, Hebrews, Macedonians, Romans, Greeks, Saracens, Franks, Arabs and Turks.

These rich fields were the source of the power and the wealth of the Philistines, and Israel fought for them. They extend from the sandy beach of the Mediterranean to the rocky wall of the hills of Judea, and in ancient times were called "Little Egypt" because they produced as lavishly as the valley of the Nile. The five great cities of the Philistines guarded this plain, furnished the market for its farmers and the consumers for its produce, but none of them, excepting Gaza, has survived the centuries. Gath, the home of the giants, has entirely disappeared. It was totally destroyed about 750 years before Christ, and was never rebuilt. Its location is a matter of dispute. Ascalon was the seat of the worship of Venus, and, although her temple was destroyed many centuries ago, its ruins still lie upon a picturesque eminence, and large flocks of the posterity of the sacred doves consecrated to her are still cooing about the luxuriant gardens that lie within the crumbling walls. Ascalon is celebrated for the extreme beauty and profusion of the gardens that surround its site, and the oranges grown there are said to be even better than those of Jaffa.

Ashdod was the site of a splendid temple to Dagon, rivaling that at Gaza, which Samson pulled down. At a little village called Beit-Dajan, near Jaffa, there is a "house of Dagon" still standing, whose origin dates back to the beginning of the Christian era, although its exact age is unknown.

Gaza, or Ghuzzeh, as the modern Arabs call it, is one of the oldest and, at the same time, one of the

most progressive and flourishing towns in Palestine, and now the largest city upon its coast. It stood there before Abraham saw the land of promise, and has been fought over by every force that has invaded Judea since the days of the Pharaohs, because it has been the door to Africa, the gateway to Asia, an oasis of great fertility upon the edge of a desert, the source of supply for a vast population of Bedouins for at least five thousand years. It is the chief trading point for the population within a radius of a hundred miles, who come to its bazaars for their cloth, weapons, pottery and food. It is the starting place for the caravans to Egypt. They are organized there, and all roads from the south lead to Gaza. It is as important to the commerce of that part of the country as Damascus is to northern Syria, and occupies a similar position in relation to the deserts that surround both. Gaza is eight days' march from the Nile and about three days by camel from Jerusalem. The Pharaohs and Ptolemys fought for it against the Emperors of Assyria and Persia for that reason. Bonaparte considered it a great strategic point, and during the crusades it was drenched with blood again and again.

Yet, with a tenacity similar to that of Damascus, and for the same reason, Gaza has clung to life, although it has suffered numberless sieges, has been sacked forty times, has been burned down and blown up with explosives and at least twice its population has been almost exterminated. In the second and third centuries it was an opulent and splendid city, a prosperous center of commerce and one of the highest examples of Greek culture and architecture on the Mediterranean. Its schools of philosophy and rhetoric drew students from all the civilized world. The tem-



ples of Gaza were famous. The entire Greek pantheon was adopted by the Philistines when Dagon, the fish god, was overthrown, but after the crusade Gaza became Moslem and has remained so ever since.

There are now about 40,000 inhabitants, almost exclusively Moslems. The Jewish population does not number more than 100, nor the Greeks more than 500. There is a Roman Catholic mission with a few monks, but no converts, and a mission of the Church of England, which sustains a hospital and a school. The bazaars are extremely interesting, and are stocked with every class of goods, European and Oriental, but the town is as filthy as any in Palestine, and, being without sewers or proper drains, is extremely unhealthy. Owing to the proximity of the desert and the reflection of the sun upon the sand, the inhabitants suffer generally from ophthalmia, and the English missionaries have established a free hospital for the treatment of that disease.

There is a fine mosque, formerly a Christian church, and tradition ascribes its erection to the Empress Helena, who, it is said, dedicated it to John the Baptist, but there is no reason to believe the story. The Emperor Baldwin I of Jerusalem, who died there in 1118, was buried in one of the suburban villages; an ancient mosque contains the grave of Hashim, Mohammed's grandfather, and another mosque, which looks very modern covers what is said to be the tomb of Samson.

Owing to the abundance of water the vegetation is very rich and the flowers and foliage are of surpassing beauty. The trees swarm with song birds and the air is laden with their music. The chief staple is soap, made from olive oil, and shipped across the desert to



Cairo. None is shipped by sea because there is a superstition that salt air damages it, and it is all carried upon the backs of camels, which are capable of taking cargoes of 550 pounds. Of late years a good deal of wheat has been exported because the farms in the neighborhood have been producing with unusual abundance and the surplus of the harvests has been large. Gaza is three miles from the sea, and if it had a harbor and a railroad it would be even more important as a trade center than now.

An air of age and decay, which is noticeable to strangers, is said to be due to the stone of which the city is built. It is saturated with saltpeter, which gives it a moldy color and causes rapid disintegration. The modern town has neither walls nor gates, but the guides point out in the eastern part of the city the place where stood the gates which Samson carried off to the top of a hill on the trail to Hebron. Near by is the prison, which stands on the site of the mill in which he is said to have been confined, and the top of Castle Hill is strewn with cut stone and broken pillars, which are said to have been a part of the vast Temple of Dagon, which he pulled down upon himself and 3,000 of his enemies.

There is very little of interest in Gaza except these historic sites, most of which are probably authentic, but are not deemed of any value either by the Roman Catholics or the Greeks. Nor do the Jews show any interest in them. Samson is neglected.

This mighty man was born at Zorah, a little village on the hillside about four hundred feet above the general level of the plain, in a picturesque and healthful situation. In the spring time it is surrounded by a garden of wild flowers, daisies, gladioli, oleanders,

geraniums of all shades, lilies and roses, that grow like weeds. The entire hill is almost hidden with the lustrous foliage of olive trees. Here "the child Samson grew up, and the Lord blessed him, and the spirit of the Lord began to move him," and in early manhood he removed to Timnath, a similar village on the other side of the hill, where he found his first love, and slew the young lion whose carcass was a beehive, and suggested the fatal riddle which his thirty wedding companions could not solve, and which culminated in so many tragedies. It was there that he turned loose the three hundred foxes, or jackals, as the commentators upon the Bible generally claim, with firebrands tied to their tails, and burned up "both the shocks and the standing corn, with the vineyards and the olives." We can understand just how this was done, because the fields of wheat stretch for miles in every direction now, as they did in his day, without even a stone wall or a hedge to divide them. The only division lines are footpaths, and if a lot of jackals with firebrands attached to their tails were turned into them to-day when the crop was ready for harvest they would burn like tinder and the whole community would be ruined.

The town of Lydda, which is only an hour's drive from Jaffa, was the scene of the martyrdom of St. George in the year 303. He was a Roman soldier of noble birth, served as a tribune under the Emperor Diocletian, was an early convert to Christianity, a lay teacher of great fame among the saints, and gave his life for the faith. He was buried at Lydda. The Empress Helena is said to have erected the magnificent church that stood over his tomb for centuries, and it was visited by pilgrims until it was destroyed. The first Crusaders built a cathedral upon its ruins, a build-



ing of imposing dimensions and formidable walls, which they used as a fortress. In the second crusade, upon the approach of Richard the Lion Heart and his legions, Saladin destroyed it. Richard rebuilt the shrine and carried the name and the fame of St. George to England, where, under King Edward III., he became the patron saint of that country. He is the object of Mohammedan as well as Christian reverence, and the Moslems claim to have his body in the Damascus mosque. The members of both faiths have his name upon their lists of saints. The legend of his rescue of a beautiful maiden from a dragon can be traced back only to the sixth century, and is said to have originally been a parable intended to illustrate the triumph of Christianity over paganism. Other scholars consider it a version of the legend of Perseus and Andromeda.

To-day the population of Lydda does not number more than 300 or 400, mostly Mohammedans, and the great Cathedral of St. George is a mosque.

It is fifty-three miles by railroad from Jaffa to Jerusalem; there is one passenger train each way daily and the journey is about four hours. The track is standard gauge. The locomotives and rolling stock were built in France for the Panama road, but upon the collapse of the canal company the owners of the Jerusalem line, who are also Frenchmen, bid them in at a low price. The managers of the railway are French, but most of the employes are Arabs. The track is well constructed and kept in excellent order; the station houses, water tanks, side tracks, machine-shops and other parts of the plant are beyond criticism. The grade is quite steep in certain places, the highest elevation being a pass in the mountains of Judea, 3,500



feet above the sea. It then descends gradually to Jerusalem, which is about 2,500 feet. The journey formerly required two days by carriage or diligence and was very tedious. The camel trains make it in about twenty-six hours, stopping only occasionally for rest and feed. Many sentimental people complain of the invasion of the Holy Land by modern improvements, and deplore that the sanctity of the holy city is defiled by the odor of steam, the soot of burning coal and the shriek of the locomotive whistle, and if those were all that defiled Jerusalem every person of public spirit and religious convictions would be willing to have them suppressed. They are the very least of the evils that afflict Zion, and for the poor, sick and weary pilgrims, who come here by thousands to kiss the sacred soil and to pray at the cradle and the tomb of the Savior the railway is an unmeasured blessing.

Our train was an ordinary one, made up of first and third class coaches. The latter were crowded with Russian pilgrims, devotees of the Greek church, and I was told that the party was small compared with the numbers that are generally carried over the road each way daily at that season of the year. They were mostly old people, peasants, stout-looking men and women, wearing the heaviest of winter clothing in the warm spring sunshine of Jaffa, clumsy cowhide boots and fur caps, which looked so hot and uncomfortable. Each had a roll of bedding and a sack containing food and other supplies, and nearly all of them had teapots and cups of tin or granite ware hanging from their belts or over their shoulders by a strap. They literally take up their beds and walk, and cook their own meals while on the journey, buying what supplies they need at the local shops. But the Russian government looks

after them with great care and solicitude, making sure that they are well treated and are protected from swindlers and other evils.

The Russian consul at Jerusalem has a large staff of assistants, and his vice consul at Jaffa always receives parties of pilgrims when they arrive and sends guides and military guards with them to Jerusalem, where they are transferred to the officials there and taken to the hospices provided by the government for their accommodation. No other nation exercises this paternal care over its pilgrims. Those who come from other countries have to look after themselves, and are the prey of human cormorants in all garbs and guises. The Russian pilgrims on our train were chaperoned by two fine-looking Montenegrins, who bought their tickets and watched over them as carefully as if they had been paid couriers of princes.

Several picturesque-looking natives had places in the third-class car: Bedouins, wearing under their turbans the long white curtains that protect the back of their heads and necks from the burning sun, and girded about with scimitars, revolvers and knives, as if they were on their way to battle. There were veiled women wrapped in sheets that concealed every outline of their figures, as the shawls over their heads concealed their faces.

The first-class carriages were crowded with German, English and American excursionists from the steamer *Augusta Victoria*, which arrived that day with a party of 350 passengers. Most of them went up to Jerusalem on a special train early in the morning and were distributed around among the different hotels. While these excursions have their advantages in respect of economy and social features, the passengers have to go



about in droves like "dumb driven cattle," having a fixed daily and hourly schedule for sight-seeing to which they are compelled to adhere strictly, because there are so many places to see and so little time. If anything is omitted or overdone the entire arrangement is disconcerted and demoralized; hence the conductors are compelled to preserve the strictest kind of discipline. The passengers are assigned to hotels so far as they can be accommodated and packed away as closely as possible. When the hotels are filled the remainder are sent to the monasteries of the Catholic religious orders, which are much more comfortable and cleaner than most of the hotels.

Three hundred and fifty people fill up a place like Jerusalem; they crowd the churches and other places that must be visited, so that they are not only uncomfortable, but it is difficult for some of them to see or hear anything. In a city like London, Rome, Naples or Constantinople eight hundred strangers can be taken care of easily, but the Holy Land lacks room for so many. The country cannot accommodate them.

It is difficult to study Old Testament history in a railway car, even though the train does not run faster than fifteen miles an hour, but we can at least look out of the window as we pass holy and historic places and read about them in the guide book in the meantime. Every mile of country through which the track runs is associated with events in the early life of the Jewish nation. On every side are hills, valleys and villages that we read about in the Bible when we were children in the Sunday school. The first station after Jaffa is Lydda, the home of St. George, the dragon killer, and the scene of many exciting events during the crusades. The second station is Ramleh, which is said to have



been the home of Joseph of Arimathæa, who loaned his tomb to Jesus. We cross the Plain of Sharon, which is covered with luxuriant orchards of orange, lemon and fig trees. The fields are radiant with wild flowers, millions of poppies, pimpernels, anemones, convolvulus, narcissus, blue iris, roses of Sharon and lilies of the valley. All nature is alive and pulsating with the energy of growth, "every clod feels the stir of life," the air is filled with bees and butterflies, and the twittering of birds and the shadows of hawks creep over the fields as they soar between them and the sun. At the railway stations are crowds of children and women with great nosegays of brilliant colors, which they offer for a penny, and large baskets of oranges and other fruits for any price that the passengers will pay.

As the train winds out from the cultivated valley into the dark gorges of the mountains we pass Gezer, an ancient town, which belonged to Pharaoh and came into the possession of Solomon as the dowry of one of his nine hundred brides. It was once an important place, but has been a mass of shapeless ruins since the crusades, and the English Exploration Society has recently obtained permission from the sultan to excavate among them, with confidence of making important archeological discoveries.

The foothills are clad with vineyards, and in each one is a watch tower, occupied by sentinels day and night as the fruit becomes ripe, to keep wandering Bedouins from stealing the grapes. The hills are terraced to their very tops with walls of stone to prevent the soil from being washed down into the valleys by the heavy rains, and to give the roots of the vines more room to grow. As we approach the divide the

scenery becomes more rugged and rocky, and the soil less fertile. There are no more plowed fields or olive groves or vineyards, but the mountain sides are covered with herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and goats, and we see both natural and artificial caverns in the walls of rock. One of them is pointed out as the tomb of Samson, and all of them at one time or another have been occupied by monkish hermits and used as retreats by penitents who have given themselves up to fasting and meditation to purify their souls and mortify their flesh. Many of these subterranean chambers are identified with the early saints, but history and legendry are mixed up so closely through all this country that we never know how to separate them.

Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah and other of the prophets are said to have lived here. The home of Jeremiah was at Anathoth, a little village northeast of Jerusalem, from which you can look over the broken and barren hills which surround the Dead Sea and the desert, and were always before the gaze of the prophet; a desolate vision that was burned into his memory. The howling of wild beasts, the drifting of the dry sand, the rush of wind through the gorges, were the music to which his life was attuned, and the impressions appear upon every page of his prophecies.

We cross the Wady el Nazil, a wide valley which separates the Judean range of mountains from the lower hills of the west. A narrow pass leads through the ravines to Hebron, about twelve miles away, and Bethlehem is just a little off the road. It is a rough but happy land, with glens and moors and narrow strips of cultivated soil, utilized wherever found; scanty pastures and clumps of brushwood, and here



and there is a group of pines. It is an ideal place for bushmen like Samson and was once strewn with the bones of his enemies. Here Israel met the Philistines in battle again and again. Here the sun stood still at General Joshua's orders. It was the border land between the territory of the two nations. Their armies were encamped in this valley on that day when Jesse sent his boy David down from Bethlehem to inquire of his brothers for news, and the stripling shepherd accepted the challenge of Goliath, the Philistine giant. The duel seems to have been fought in several different places, according to the opinions of the various authorities upon such subjects, and one man has as good a right to point out the spot as another, since nobody knows anything about it, except that it occurred somewhere near this place. The Vale of Elah was the scene of the greatest campaigns of David afterward; several battles between the Jews and Romans were fought there, and between Saladin and the crusaders. Every inch of the soil has been contested again and again and drenched with the blood of several races.

Crawling through these gorges the train crossed the boundaries of Judea and entered upon a region which has been the scene of more history and the center of more interest than any spot in the world. Judea was the most enduring dynasty of Israel, and its name has clung to the race, being used more generally than their ancestral title of Hebrews or the sacred title of Israel, and yet the country is very small, about the size of an ordinary county in the United States. The distance from Bethel to Beersheba, the farthest limits north and south, is fifty-five miles, and the breadth of the province averages about twenty-five miles; the total area



being 1,350 miles, of which nearly one-half is desert. Judea is a high and broken tableland, varying in altitude from 1,200 to 3,000 feet above the sea. The summit of the Mount of Olives is 2,580 feet higher than the landing place at Jaffa.



XIX  
The Holy City









RAILROAD STATION AT JERUSALEM.



## XIX

### THE HOLY CITY

There is a handsome railway station in Jerusalem, built of a fine quality of pinkish stone, which is quarried in the vicinity and generally used for building purposes. Just before the train enters the town it passes through a group of attractive-looking houses built of the same material, with roofs of red tile and surrounded by orange and olive trees and luxuriant gardens. You know at once that either Europeans or Americans abide there, because no Turk, Arab or Jew, in this part of the country at least, ever kept such neat places or thought of surrounding himself with such beautiful specimens of the vegetable kingdom. It is another of the colonies of Germans, founded by the Temple Society, who have come here, as they went to Jaffa, Haifa and elsewhere, to promote the kingdom of God on earth and teach their neighbors how to live in cleanliness, comfort and contentment; how to spend their time in useful occupations and how to deal honorably with their fellow men—lessons which the population of the Orient find it very difficult to learn. The Temple Society does no evangelical work, although it is founded upon religious principles. It is organized to promote the material welfare of the people of Palestine, and, although there is not much improvement to be noticed yet, they have probably made as many converts as the other missionary societies, certainly more than the missions to the Jews.

The missionary question must be treated more deli-

cately in Palestine than elsewhere because converts are so few. I was not able to learn of a single Moslem convert to Christianity and of only two Jewish converts, although I asked pointed questions of all the Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Greek missionaries I have met. The Protestants and Catholics claim converts from the Orthodox Greeks and less numerous sects that exist there. I have not yet heard of a Greek missionary who has converted a Protestant or a Catholic, and yet all of them are doing an immense amount of preaching to each other and good work in their hospitals, schools and other charitable institutions. Their influence is notable in many places toward the improvement of morals and the advancement of civilization. We know what the country was before the missionaries came and there has been a decided change for the better since. A mission for the promotion of street and house cleaning, to induce the people to use soap, towels, bathtubs and fine-tooth combs would be very useful, and perhaps might accomplish a great deal if it would begin with the governor and work down, for the governor's palace is one of the filthiest places in all Jerusalem, and its surroundings are repulsive enough to nauseate a man with copper insides.

It is almost impossible for persons with delicate stomachs, who are accustomed to pure air, to visit the Jewish quarter. It fairly reeks with stench that are new and strange. The pavements of the streets, the courts within the houses, and the living apartments as far as we had the courage to inspect them are unfit for human habitation. One of the most prominent Jewish inhabitants, a scholar and a philanthropist, apologized for these conditions and explained that the filthy condition was due to a lack of water; that the



water facilities in Jerusalem are very limited, and that all the supply for the families has to be brought a long distance in jars upon the heads of women and children.

The platform at the railway station was crowded with idlers who assemble daily to enjoy the exciting sensation of seeing the train roll in and the passengers disembark. Many of them were officers of the army who have nothing else to do. There are no amusements in Jerusalem, no parks, no tennis, no golf, no promenades, no place to ride horseback; no society, no theaters, no concerts, no dinner parties, no 5 o'clock teas, no flirtations, no libraries, no lectures, no reading-rooms, no clubs, and nothing in the way of diversion for the hundreds of officers attached to the military garrison and other young men in town, who can only sit around their barracks or go to the cafes, or play billiards. Hence the arrival of a railway train and a lot of strangers, who can be stared at and criticised and gossiped about, is a welcome incident in the dreary monotony of each day. The same applies to Damascus and all the towns that have railway advantages.

The hackmen are vociferous and are not regulated or restrained by the police. The porters are impertinent. They grab your bags, rush off, put them into the carriages of their friends and hold on to them until you submit to blackmail. If you telegraph for rooms, a dragoman from the hotel comes down to meet you, takes charge of your luggage, escorts you to a carriage he has bespoken, and stands off the enterprising Arabs who are trying to frighten you into paying baksheesh.

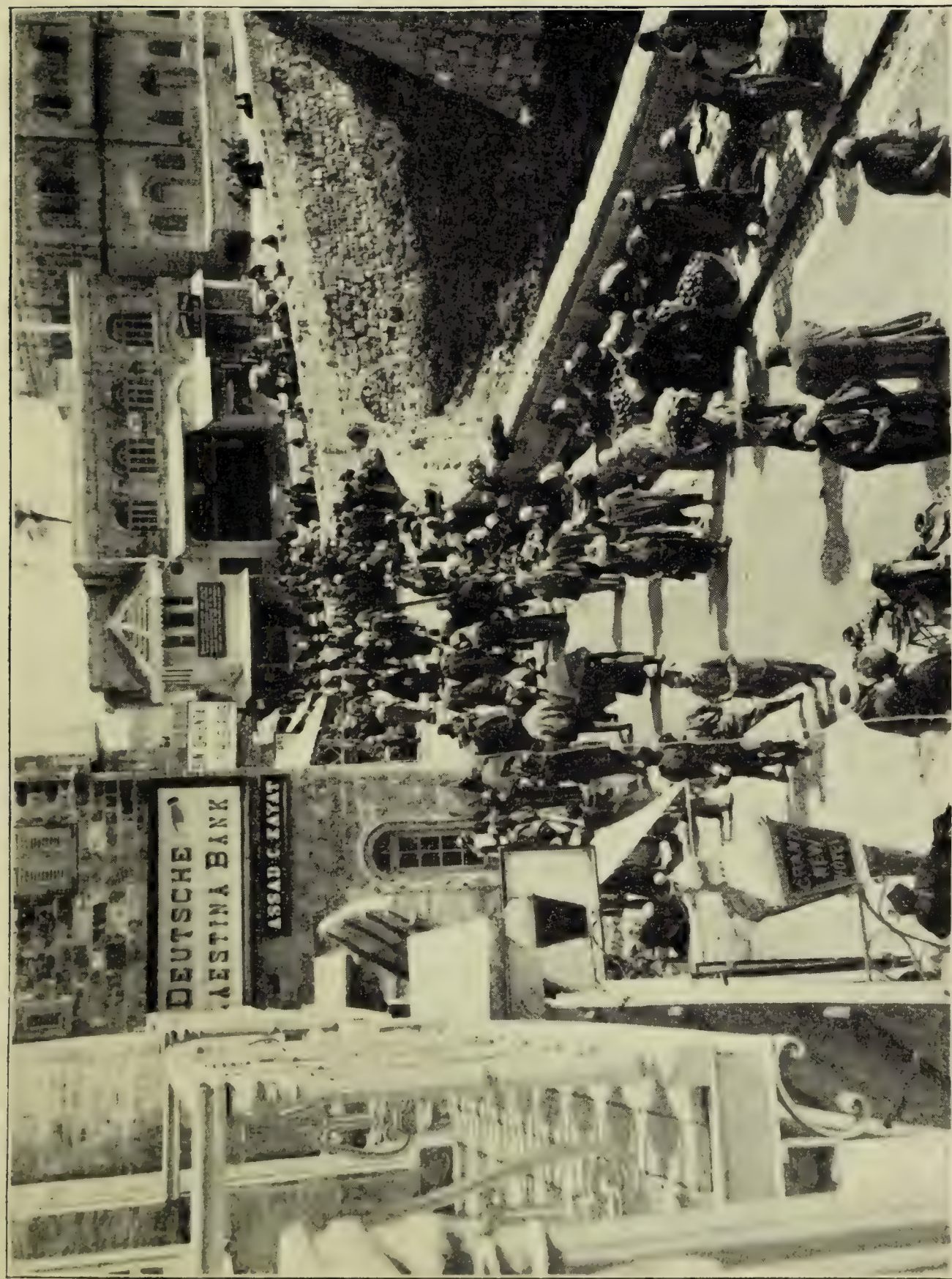
The depot is outside the walls, about ten minutes' ride from the Jaffa gate, which is the busiest place in



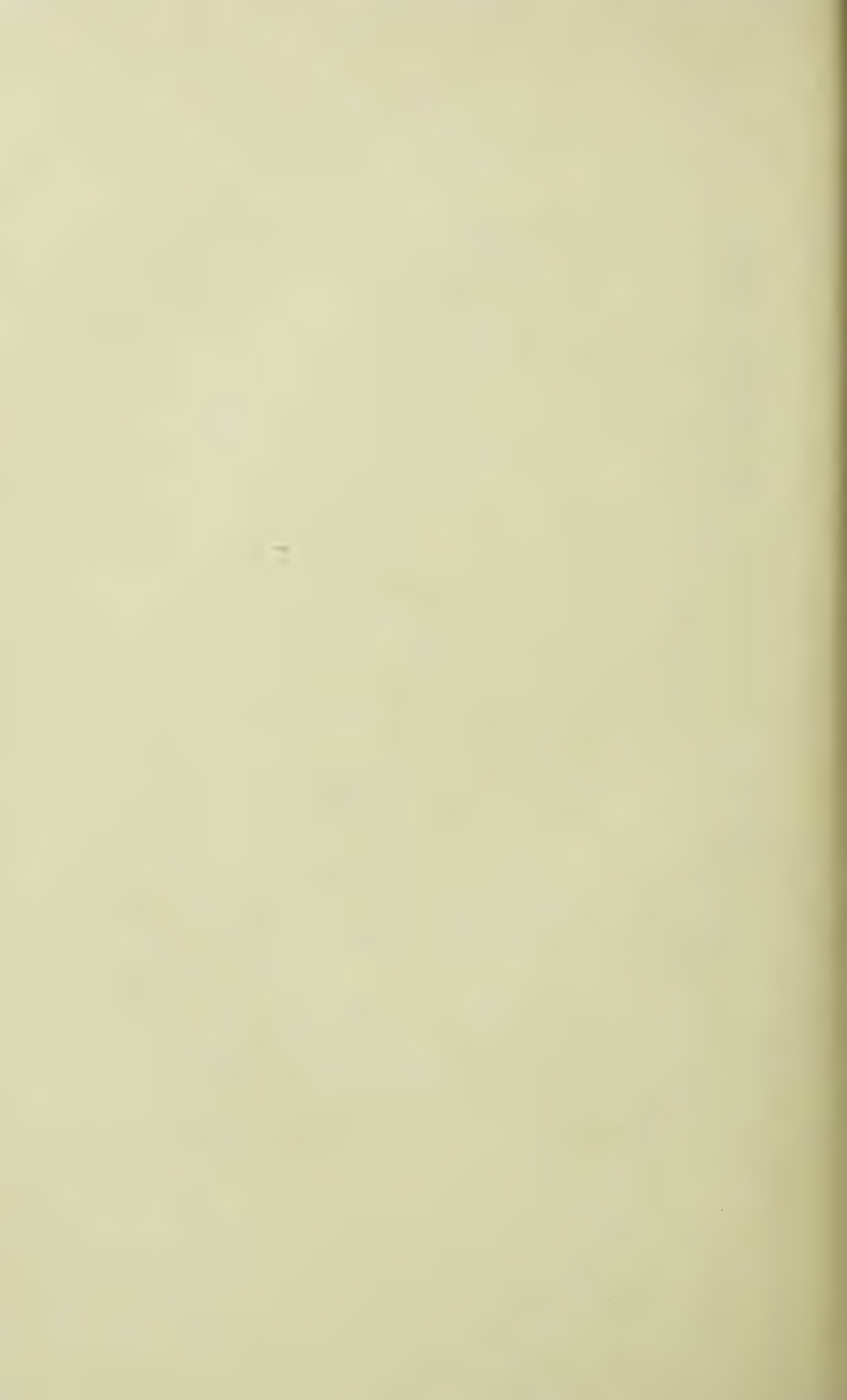
Jerusalem, and the Tower of David its most picturesque bit of architecture, and the only one of the three ancient towers that was spared by the Emperor Titus when he destroyed the city. When one approaches from the direction of the railway station, which is on the road to Bethlehem, it has the appearance of a strongly fortified medieval castle. When Jerusalem was taken by the crusaders it was the last place to yield. It rises to the height of seventy feet, is surrounded by a deep moat and entered by an arched bridge. The lower tiers in the walls, which are extremely ancient, are laid off with enormous blocks of stone, ten or twelve feet in length and eight or ten feet thick, which have withstood the battering rams of invaders and the decay of the ages—a solid, formidable pile, which is now occupied by a Turkish garrison and is the headquarters of the police and the military commandant. This castle was not built by David, but probably stands upon foundations that he laid and commands the approach to Mount Zion, upon which his palace stood.

Outside the Jaffa Gate, which adjoins the Tower of David, and is the chief entrance for trade, travel and pilgrims into the Holy City, is a large square surrounded by cafes, commission and brokerage offices, animal corrals and khans, the busiest place in all Judea, where all the centuries and all the races meet and hustle each other. It is the horse and camel market of Jerusalem, the headquarters of the saddlers, farriers and veterinarians, the starting place of the caravans that leave and the camping place of those that enter the city. It is the rendezvous of buyers and sellers of all classes of produce and merchandise, a general market at which anything can be bought or





JERUSALEM FROM THE HOTEL BALCONY.





ordered, a sort of bourse or exchange and chamber of commerce. It is the court and the parliament of the masses, where they hold public meetings, discuss politics and theology and gossip about the state of affairs. It is an employment agency, where groups of laborers and husbandmen and mechanics sit around and sleep in the sun while waiting to be hired, and where angry women come to hunt for truant husbands and lovers. Here complaints are made to the police officers, and lawyers consult with clients from the country. It is an unpaved and dusty forum, littered with rubbish and filth, swarming with mangy dogs, obstructed by ugly camels, which chew their cud indifferently and give their whole mind to the purpose of their stay there, which is rest. Professional letter writers with a scholarly air, wearing spotless white turbans and long white cotton cloaks, sit around with ink-horns and blocks of paper in convenient corners, sheltered by umbrellas from the heat of the sun, just as they have done in the public places of Jerusalem since the days of David. Money changers have piles of coins displayed upon little tables before them; dealers in pottery, saddlery, groceries, bread and other necessities of life required by the caravans have shaded stands against the walls. Arab and Jewish girls go about chaffing their admirers and selling baskets of fruit; venders of lemonade and sherbet, with pigskins hung over their shoulders, which look as if they would burst with their contents, clink brass cups with a musical rhythm like castanets, to attract attention. Sharp-looking old men offer the camel drivers rosaries, beads and amulets to hang around the necks of their animals to keep off the evil eye; itinerant barbers do a brisk business all day out of doors, shaving the heads of the

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Bedouins. You can hire here horses, saddles, camels, donkeys and any other kind of beast by the hour or the day or the week, or by the distance; you can charter camel trains for any place within the limits of Asia Minor or Egypt; you can contract for the transportation of freight to any point, and you can buy or sell anything that is marketable.

Inside the gates there is a similar scene, limited by the narrower space, which is surrounded by the European consulates, banks, tourist agencies, restaurants of European style and the shops of curio dealers, for here is the largest hotel in town, patronized by the richest strangers and the residence quarter of the foreign population. Back of it is the Christian quarter and the best part of the city. The streets are not so filthy as elsewhere and are wide enough for a man and a camel to pass. The finest house is owned and occupied by the abbot of the Greek monastery, the richest man in this part of the country, and the most enterprising. There are good hotels in Jerusalem, with all grades of rates and accommodations. Dr. Merrill, who has been consul of the United States here for thirty years or more, off and on, and who knows all about Palestine, lives at one of them, and is the center of attraction and the oracle for advice and information during the tourist season.

Strangers are beset by beggars and peddlers from the time they step off the cars until they step on again for departure, and it is one of the worst nuisances they have to endure. Three-fourths of the people of Jerusalem get their living off pilgrims and tourists, who are met by swindlers and imposters on every side. The sale of bogus relics is one of the most extensive and profitable industries. Every pilgrim and every





A BEDOUIN TENT.





tourist thinks it necessary to take home with him a quantity of souvenirs made of olive wood, and the dealer invariably guarantees that the wood from which they are made came from the Mount of Olives. Tons, car loads, of boxes, paper cutters, crosses, albums, picture frames, Bible and prayer book covers, rulers, writing desks, tablets, and other things are sold and carried off every year by sentimental people, and cherished as souvenirs of the Mount of Olives, when if they had stopped to inquire they would very soon learn that not one of the few trees that remain on Olivet has been trimmed for fifty years. Loads of olive lumber are brought to shops on the outskirts of Jerusalem and worked up into boxes, but not a splinter of it comes from sacred ground. The Garden of Gethsemane is another favorite place for relics, mostly sprigs of cypress and olive, and pressed flowers. Ship loads of such souvenirs are sent over the world every year. They are sold at church fairs and festivals; they are presented to libraries and museums by pious people, are gratefully received and appreciated, and the monks who are in the business make large sums of money; but not one sprig of olive or cypress out of a hundred thousand actually comes from Gethsemane. The monks gather their material from the olive groves on the surrounding hills, and when I accused a jolly Irish Franciscan of being engaged in this business he laughed and explained that they mix as many sprigs as they can spare from Gethsemane with the supply they bring from the country, and that sanctifies the whole.

Next to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Christian tourists and pilgrims find the Garden of Gethsemane the most interesting spot in Palestine,

but unless they happen to be in a state of ecstasy it is very disappointing. There are two gardens in which it is claimed that the Savior spent that awful night—one held by the orthodox Greeks and the other by the Roman Catholics, but they are contiguous, and it is possible that both may have been a single garden at the time of the Savior. The interiors are similarly arranged and both are surrounded by high stone walls, plastered and whitewashed and protected by heavily barred gates of oak and iron. Both are laid out in what is called the French style, with hedges of box wood and gravel walks dividing rectangular, triangular and hemispherical beds in which flowering plants are growing. There are clumps of palms, lilacs and oleanders at the corners and fountains in the center. Everything is as unlike as possible what the place must have been at the time of the crucifixion, while a heavy wire screen, with close meshes, higher than the head of a man, protects the plants from vandals. The only evidence of antiquity are eight aged olive trees, whose appearance dispels all doubt as to their age, and some botanists have asserted that they are the most venerable of their race upon the surface of the earth, while the guides insist that they are the very trees under which the Savior wept and prayed.

The Roman Catholic garden is very small, not more than 300 feet long by 200 feet wide, in the shape of an irregular triangle. The Greek garden is considerably larger.

These trees are utilized in an extraordinary manner for the purpose of raising money. Each is theoretically owned by a stock company, unlimited. As much stock is issued as the public will absorb, and the dividends, which are paid in the form of little fancy vials



filled with oil, are certain. Although the trees ceased to bear fruit generations ago, the monks in charge do not hesitate to give assurances to the contrary to the shareholders, and of course there is always enough olive oil to be had in Jerusalem to pay the dividends. Ground sanctified by the Savior's tears, to many minds the most sacred spot on earth, is thus profaned by this and other swindles practiced by men who should be driven from that holy place as Christ drove the traders from the temple.

There are many humbugs about here. The guides point out to you the "terra damnata," the exact spot where Judas kissed the Savior, and the stone upon which the apostles slept when they should have been watching. The gospels tell us that three of them were in the party, but the stone is not big enough for more than two very small men.

Gethsemane is at the foot of the Mount of Olives, and a good roadway, kept in excellent order by the Russians, leads to the top of the hill, an easy walk of half an hour. Upon the way you see some remarkable things. For example, a light gray rock is pointed out as the place where the Madonna dropped her girdle when she ascended to heaven; a little farther up is another rock upon which Jesus stood when He beheld the city and wept over it. Here is the stone from which the Holy Virgin mounted the ass when starting upon her journey to Egypt. Here is the place where Jesus forgave Peter all his sins. A place where Mary once met her Son when she was going to Bethany and He was on His way to Jerusalem, is marked by a cross, and cavities in several rocks on the hillside are shown as foot prints of saints. The barren fig tree cursed by the Savior is still growing on the Bethany side of the

mountain, and in that little town, which is only two miles from Gethsemane, a pleasant walk around the side of Mount Olivet, are shown four different houses in which Mary and Martha lived with their brother Lazarus. Two different trees are pointed out as the actual gibbets upon which Judas hanged himself, in proof whereof the branches grow toward the East, pointing away from the Holy Sepulcher, and the guides will tell you that this is a miracle. Judas trees were formerly more numerous than now, and twenty-five years ago they were at an entirely different locality. Faith in the longevity of trees in this country is astonishing. Down at Jericho they show you the tree that Zaccheus climbed to see the Savior pass by. To some people these humbugs are so manifest as to be amusing, but they deceive 90 per cent of the devout, trusting pilgrims who come to worship and adore and thus a great wrong is done.

Across the street from Gethsemane, only a few yards away, is a very ancient church known as the Church of the Virgin, erected as long ago as the fifth century to cover the traditional tomb of the Holy Mother, and beside it are shown the tombs of her husband, Joseph, her father, Joachim, and her mother, Anna; although there is not the slightest evidence of their authenticity and the general council of the church centuries ago decided that the Madonna died and was buried in Ephesus. Nevertheless this is a hallowed place, and one of the most ancient shrines around Jerusalem. The original church was destroyed during the Persian invasion, and the crusaders found nothing but ruins here; but Milicent, daughter of Baldwin II. and wife of Fulke of Anjou, fourth King of Jerusalem, built the present church about the middle of the twelfth cen-



tury, and it is still in a tolerable state of preservation. It has frequently changed hands, and now belongs to the Greeks. The Roman Catholics, the Armenians and the Abyssinians have altars in little chapels, and the Mohammedans have a prayer recess to which their priests come frequently, as they regard it as a holy place.

Near the altar of the Abyssinians is a well, believed to be fed by the River of Paradise, and the Greeks and Armenians consider it a specific for all diseases. According to their traditions the spring was opened by the pressure of the sandal of the Holy Mother when she sprang into the arms of the angel hosts that carried her to heaven. Of her life after the crucifixion we know absolutely nothing, and the traditions do not agree. One says that she remained quietly in Jerusalem with the family of John, the beloved disciple to whom Jesus intrusted the care of His mother, and died here at the age of seventy-two. Another tradition says that she accompanied the apostle when he went to Ephesus to meet Paul and Barnabas, about the year 50 or 52, as related in the fifteenth chapter of The Acts, and that she died there, being between sixty-five and seventy years of age. A third tradition says that she accompanied St. John and his family to Babylon and died there.

Notwithstanding the plain and direct statement in the gospels that Jesus led His disciples "as far as to Bethany" and, having "lifted up His hands and blessed them, He was parted from them and carried up into heaven," the Chapel of the Ascension is located upon the Jerusalem side of the Mount of Olives, and in a very conspicuous place, not far from the Garden of Gethsemane. This is said to be due to a misunder-



standing. In the year 315 the Emperor Constantine gave directions for the erection of a chapel upon the site, but, through the stupidity of the agents to whom the duty was intrusted, the foundations were laid here instead of on the other side of Mount Olivet, as plainly indicated by the evangelists. Copies of the gospels were very scarce in those days, few people were able to read, and such a mistake was natural and easy, but it was never corrected. A venerable priest explained to me with a smile that it was easier to remove the site than to remove the chapel. The present chapel, strange to say, belongs to the Mohammedans, like the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, but they permit the various Christian denominations to celebrate mass there on certain days, and the Roman Catholics, Orthodox Greeks, Armenians, Syrians, Copts and Abyssinians each have their separate altars. Mohammedan moulahs come there daily to pray, and on Friday, the Mohammedan Sabbath, Christians are not allowed in the place. In many other ways and many other places the followers of Mohammed show their reverence for Christ. While they deny Him divinity, they accept Him as a great teacher, an inspired teacher and messenger of God.

There is quite a town upon the summit of the Mount of Olives, several churches, monasteries, nunneries, hospices and other buildings, of which those belonging to the Russians are the largest and most conspicuous. Between 600 and 700 people reside there continuously, and a procession of pilgrims is constantly passing up and down the road which leads from Jerusalem. The minaret of the Russian church is the most conspicuous object, and may be seen from every point of vantage over a large area. The view from its bal-

conies is unsurpassed. The Carmelite nuns have an enormous convent and novices are frequently brought there to remain in the sacred atmosphere for several months or a year before beginning their life work. The Greek bishop has a palace within the Russian inclosure, and a large villa belonging to the late Marquis of Bute, a Roman Catholic Scotsman, stands near by.

The slopes of Mount Olivet on the Jerusalem side are covered with Jewish cemeteries, the graves being marked with cenotaphs, flat slabs of marble or headstones, which usually bear elaborate inscriptions. It has been well said that when the last trumpet sounds more Jews will arise in the Valley of Jehoshaphat than were ever gathered together since the hosts of Israel, under Joshua, crossed the Jordan, but the number buried there is unknown. Several associations have charge of the cemeteries, and their records are believed to be accurately kept, but this has been a burial ground for many centuries and it is still the holiest desire of every pious Jew to lay his ashes in this sacred soil. There are other cemeteries on the slopes of Mount Zion, but those of Mount Olivet are more popular. Hence, to gratify this ambition, the ground has been sold over and over again, and the population of the city of the dead has been renewed quite as often as that of the city of the living. However, there is always six feet of earth for every Jew that comes, and not only Jews, but Jebusites, Syrians, Macedonians, Persians, Romans, Egyptians, Saracens, Greeks, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Germans and representatives of every family of the human race, even Turks, have sought tombs here; unnamed hosts, unnumbered armies, whose ashes have been allowed



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to rest until their beds were wanted for another generation.

In the Valley of Jehoshaphat, which has been often used as a symbol of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, are several conspicuous tombs and monuments said to be those of Absalom, Saint James the Apostle, Jehoshaphat, Zachariah and other prophets, warriors and saints. Although there is no tangible evidence of their authenticity, they are all certainly very old and some of them may actually be what they are represented. A monolith cut out of the living rock, twenty-one feet high, nineteen and a half feet square, is called the tomb of Absalom, and the Jews throw stones against it and spit at it as they pass by. The Bible states positively that Absalom was buried in the woods where he fell, but it also states that "Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale; for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance; and he called the pillar after his own name, and it is called unto this day, Absalom's place." This monument has been known since the year 333. At that date it was already old. It is entirely possible that it may be the pillar referred to.

Jerusalem has recently been blessed with a new and abundant water supply drawn from the famous pools of Solomon and conducted for nine miles through a nine-inch pipe over the ruins of a brick and stone aqueduct, through which its fountains were fed in the days before Babylonian captivity. There was a scandal connected with the transaction, something about the misappropriation of funds, and a good deal of criticism was passed upon the late governor, but it was such a remarkable event, so unusual in a Turkish



administration, that if he had secured the money by highway robbery he is entitled to the everlasting gratitude of people who live here and thousands who come to visit Jerusalem.

In the old days Jerusalem was abundantly supplied with water. The remains of fountains, reservoirs and aqueducts show this, but during the recent centuries the public has been compelled to depend upon a few fetid pools and the rain water which ran off the roofs into cisterns. Sickness and distress prevailed so extensively during a recent drought that the governor was stirred to action and purchased the pipe which brought the water from Ain Salah (the Sealed Fountain), at the rate of 8,000 skins—that is, goat skins—a day.

The pools of Solomon are three reservoirs situated in a valley south of Jerusalem. The largest is 582 by 148 feet in size and 48 feet deep, hewn in the rock, and lined with masonry. The second is 423 by 159 feet and 38 feet deep, and the third is 381 by 228 feet and 25 feet deep, while the hidden or sealed fountain has never been measured. Solomon refers to it in one of his songs, where he says: "My beloved is like a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." It is the subterranean spring or reservoir which flows freely at all times of the year and appears to be fed by an artesian basin. Archeologists assert that the aqueduct which brought the water to Jerusalem was built by the Romans, but Solomon is still credited with the enterprise, and if he is entitled to it, it is one of the oldest of human structures. The people of Bethlehem have been drawing water from these pools ever since Scriptural times, and still depend upon them as a source of supply. Some years ago the Baroness Burdett-Coutts

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offered to restore the aqueduct to Jerusalem, which would have cost her in the neighborhood of \$250,000, but the Turkish authorities actually demanded a bribe from her agents before they would permit her to do this benevolent act for the benefit of the people. The gentleman who related the circumstance to me remarked that the authorities did not comprehend the irony of the situation, but were so accustomed to demanding baksheesh that they did it as a matter of habit. The baroness was so indignant that she withdrew the proposition.

In the twentieth chapter of Second Kings we are told that King Hezekiah dug a pool and made a conduit and brought water into the city. The pool is still in good preservation, in constant use, and is in the center of the city, among the bazaars and next to the monastery of the Copt priests. It is a great basin in the natural rock, 250 by 140 feet in size, walled up with masonry, and was originally about twenty feet deep, but has been partially filled up with rubbish, and the water is now not more than twelve or fifteen feet deep. The families living in the neighborhood come several times a day and dip up what they need.

The famous pool of Siloam is a nasty place, with repulsive surroundings. Those who visit it often wonder if the familiar hymn,

By cool Siloam's shady rill,  
How sweet the lily grows,

was intended as satire, as there is no rill, and no shade, and no lily would ever be so immodest as to grow in such a place. The Arabs call it Silwan these days, and it is on the slopes of the Mount of Offense, where Solomon is said to have worshiped heathen idols,



directly across from the gate of Zion. The Valley of Kedron lies between. The pool is surrounded by neglected Jewish cemeteries, and is near a little village of thirty or forty miserable houses occupied by Moslems, who are notorious thieves. Their ostensible occupation is to peddle water from the Pool of Siloam among the families living in the neighborhood, carrying it in pig or goat skins on the backs of donkeys. The pool is fed by several small springs, but the ancient basin of masonry, fifty-two feet long and eighteen feet wide, has partially crumbled and fallen in, and is nearly half full of earth and rubbish. The throats of the springs are thus choked so that the water in the pool seldom rises to the level of the waste trough these days, and is therefore stagnant and usually covered with a green scum. Strange to say, it is still considered healthful and is in regular use by the surrounding population. Near by is a monolith with an Egyptian inscription, said to mark the grave of one of the wives of Solomon, a daughter of Pharaoh.

In the neighborhood is the leper hospital erected by the Turkish government, a substantial building equipped with modern improvements and comforts, but the lepers do not like it. They prefer to beg their living in the open air.

A little farther down is a venerable mulberry tree, protected by a stone wall, under which the Prophet Isaiah is said to have been sawn asunder in the presence of King Manasseh. This tradition of his martyrdom is referred to by the fathers of the church in the early chronicles.

There are several other springs in the locality. One is called Mary's Well, because the Holy Virgin is said



to have washed the swaddling clothes of the Savior in it, until after her purification.

The government of Jerusalem is no better than that of any other Turkish city. In other words, it is just as bad as it can be. The officials are extortionate, corrupt and tyrannical and hold their offices for the sake of the plunder. Dishonesty prevails in every quarter. It is even possible to buy postage stamps by the quantity at a considerable discount from private brokers, who obtain them from thieves in the post-office. The mails are so untrustworthy that three of the European nations have been compelled to establish independent postal services that are patronized by foreigners.

The bazaars are quite interesting and are similar to those found in all of the Eastern cities. They present no special features except that they deal largely in religious goods and relics, rosaries and beads of every imaginable material and color, crucifixes and crosses, shells and stones with Scripture scenes rudely portrayed upon them, castile soap made in Jerusalem, glass beads which protect the wearer against the evil eye, all kinds of articles made of olive wood, mother of pearl, coral and a black volcanic stone brought from the Dead Sea. A very large and profitable trade is done in these articles with the pilgrims.

The dogs of Jerusalem are even more of a nuisance than those of Constantinople. They are half-starved, mangy creatures, many of them covered with sores and others crippled and half-blind, which suggests that the Mohammedans or some other portion of the population have violated the injunctions of the prophet concerning kindness to beasts.

Sore eyes seem to be epidemic among the people,

which is said to be due to the glare of the sun upon the desert sands, but I think their filthy habits are responsible for a good deal. Two ophthalmic hospitals are maintained by the Christians for the benefit of the sufferers.

Jerusalem is altogether an unlovely, uncomfortable and repulsive place, and no one can come here without regret. There is no hope for improvement as long as it remains under the control of the Turk and the followers of Christ continue to show such vicious and un-Christian jealousy toward each other. If some nation possessed of the gift of government, like England, Germany or Austria, might take possession of those holy scenes and administer affairs in a liberal, enlightened and just manner it would be the crowning glory of the twentieth century. There is no reason why the earthly center of Christendom should not resemble the New Jerusalem which St. John describes in the Apocalypse:

"There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie."









A JEW OF JERUSALEM.

XX

The Jews of Jerusalem





## XX

### THE JEWS OF JERUSALEM

David, the psalmist, said: "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about His people." But this was not an exact statement. There are no mountains in the neighborhood of Jerusalem. There are several rocky, barren hills, but only three—Neby-Samwil, Er-Ram and Tuliel el-Ful—rise to any considerable elevation, and they are only ten or twelve hundred feet above the city. The nearest peaks are among the mountains of Moab, on the other side of the Jordan, perhaps fifty miles distant. In their picturesque language the Jews call them "the Mountains of the Other Side," or "the Mountains that are Across"—very expressive terms, illustrating how the river Jordan was interwoven into the poetry, the religion and the nomenclature of Israel. I suppose the psalmist was using the ordinary poetic license when he referred to the hills about the city as mountains, for, as he suggests, they are really a protection, a shelter against nature and might be a defense against invasion, if properly fortified. Mount Olivet is the highest hill in the immediate neighborhood, but it is only 180 feet above the summit of Mount Zion, although a deep valley lies between them.

Jerusalem occupies the summit of a limestone hill and is divided into two nearly equal parts by a depression called the Cheesemonger's Valley, which commences near the famous old Damascus Gate in the north part of the city, shallow and broad at first, but

deepening rapidly as its course extends, until it reaches the Kedron River, near the Pool of Siloam. The two ridges thus formed are nearly parallel and almost of the same height. The eastern, looking toward Olivet, is called Mount Moriah, and was the site of Solomon's Temple. The western is Zion, the hill sacred to David, where his palace stood and where he offered sacrifices. The Cheesemonger's Valley is well built over. Every inch of the land is occupied by solid masonry.

On the ridge of Zion, lower down the slope, lies the Jewish quarter of the city, where from 5,000 to 8,000 people, men, women and children, are packed into loathsome tenements, reeking with filth, offensive to the eye and the nostrils. This quarter was once covered with palaces and synagogues, some of the finest edifices in Jerusalem; but in any city of Europe or America it would be condemned as a plague spot and a peril to the public health. There are several synagogues, belonging to the Ashkenazim, who are of Polish and German origin and under the protection of their consuls; and the Sephardim sects, who come from Spain and Portugal, but are Turkish subjects; a hospice for Jewish pilgrims, a free dispensary and a hospital and several schools.

The population of Jerusalem is supposed to be about 60,000, although there is no census, and this is probably a low figure. Some competent authorities assert that at least 75,000 people live within the walls and in the immediate suburbs. Of these, two-thirds or three-fourths are Jews. The Moslems number about 12,000, the Roman Catholics 5,000, the Orthodox Greeks 8,000, the Armenians 800, the Protestants 1,400, the Copts 100, the Abyssinians 100 and all the other races and



kingdoms of the earth are represented, mostly by religious communities.

A considerable part of the population of the Jewish quarter talk the Spanish language and retain the customs and habits they have inherited from their ancestors, who were expelled from Spanish territory by Ferdinand and Isabella. The number of Jews now in Jerusalem is a subject of dispute, but it exceeds 30,000. Some authorities assert that they constitute at least three-fourths and perhaps four-fifths of the population, although, theoretically, they are forbidden to live here. The Jewish colony has doubled during the last twenty-five years. Immigration has increased rapidly in spite of the regulations prohibiting it, and most of the newcomers are dependent upon the charity of their European brethren. Many who have been great sinners elsewhere come here to purge their souls by fasting, prayer and devotion, but a considerable number of the Jewish community are engaged in business and are self-supporting. There are more than seventy synagogues in Jerusalem, and even a larger number of schools. The late Sir Moses Montefiore, several members of the Rothschild family, the late Baron Hirsch and other benevolent millionaires have donated an enormous amount of money to ameliorate the condition of their poor brethren in Jerusalem and gratify the desire of their souls to be buried on Mount Olivet, in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, or in the sacred soil of Zion. They have established hospitals, orphanages, training schools which are said to be the best in the East, and other institutions for the care of the poor and afflicted.

Outside the city gates is a modern settlement of Jews called the Zion suburb, composed of handsome and

comfortable houses, which offer a striking contrast to the ancient quarter in the city. Here the streets are swept daily, and are as clean as those of any village in New England. The tenements are divided into commodious and convenient apartments, with plenty of sunshine and fresh air. Gardens are frequent and are well kept. There is a Jewish hotel surrounded by handsome grounds, and a seminary for teachers which is admirable in every respect. Most of these buildings are crowded, however, the increase in the population exceeding the accommodations. The occupants of the tenements take in lodgers and pack them away as closely as possible, until the Zion suburb will soon be as densely settled as sanitary conditions will permit. A sharp line is drawn between the members of the different sects. They are as bitter and determined in their animosity as the Greek and Roman Catholics, and each regards the other as an intruder in Zion. If the legal restrictions were removed; if Jews were able to come into this country, buy property and engage in business, they would soon solve the Zionist problem, so far as the cities are concerned. Altogether they are the objects of greatest interest in Palestine, when you consider their present condition and surroundings in the light of history and their Biblical connections.

Dr. Herzl and other members of the committee of Zionists who are trying to re-people Palestine with Jews have submitted to the sultan a proposition which, if adopted and carried out, will not only relieve the members of that race now in Palestine from the cruel exactions and restrictions they suffer to-day, but will go far to restore prosperity to Zion. They, more than the other races, are oppressed by taxation and blackmail. The local officials usually require them to pay



one-tenth of all they produce as taxes, and often seize one-half or two-thirds of their crops or any property of value that may come within reach of the rapacious collectors. It is very difficult for a Jew to do business in Palestine for this reason. The local authorities feel at liberty to help themselves to anything he has. He has no protection in the courts or from any other source, because technically he has no right in the country, and hence the police officials can rob and blackmail him without mercy. This is said to be one of the reasons why the Jews live in such wretched houses and such squalor all over Palestine. Some rich men have been able to protect themselves by paying blackmail. One Jew in Jerusalem is credited with several millions of dollars, which he has made contracting with the government and with private persons, making loans and speculating in various ways. He has the confidence of the authorities, and it is said that they prefer to trade with him rather than with any other person. For reasons that may possibly occur to the mind of the reader other competitors had no chance with him in obtaining contracts under the last administration. And in private enterprises also, notwithstanding the oppressions and outrages inflicted upon them, the Jews are gradually pushing the Moslems and Christians out of their way. In Christian street, where they were not allowed to set foot a few years ago, they control three-fourths of the business places. Even now they are prohibited from approaching the farther end of the street which leads to the Holy Sepulcher. There is no law against it, but the fanatics would beat or kill them.

During the last fifteen years Jewish families have not been allowed to buy land. They are not allowed



to hold property and theoretically are prohibited from living in the country. Much Jewish property is held by trustees to evade the government; much business is done by Jews in the names of Turks, and they continue to increase by immigration. It is supposed that they bribe the custom-house inspectors to admit them at the ports.

But there are no chances for young men either in trade or the industries, and those who have enterprise and ambition must go out into the world and find something to do. Hence a stream of young Jews is leaving Palestine nearly as large as the stream of old men that is coming in. They are the best class of the population, progressive and intelligent men. They go to Australia, South Africa and the United States. The most undesirable class remain and are still coming in large numbers, prompted by piety to seek graves in the sacred soil, to escape persecution in other countries, and attracted by the comprehensive charitable systems in vogue here. Every Jew knows that if he comes to Zion he will be cared for, for not only his people, but all the Christian sects have hospitals and other benevolent institutions for his benefit. No Jews are ever converted to Christianity. Palestine is the last place in the world that such a thing ought to be expected, for religious as well as racial reasons, and the funds derived from legacies for the conversion of the Jews are used for schools and charities.

A fine technical school in the Jewish quarter outside the walls, as good as any in the United States, is training artisans and engineers, but Palestine can absorb only a few of them. There is comparatively a small demand for such talent. They find more inviting fields in Egypt, the Sudan, the Transvaal and other

parts of Africa and Australia, Canada and the United States.

The proposition to which I refer as having been submitted to the sultan by Dr. Herzl provides for farming out the taxes due from all the Jews in Palestine to the Colonial Bank. That institution agrees to assume the responsibility of collecting 10 per cent of the incomes of all the Jews in Palestine and paying the money in quarterly installments directly to the sultan without the intervention of the local officials. In that way the latter will have no power to oppress and blackmail, and on the other hand the sultan will receive annually a considerable sum, which would increase very rapidly if they were free to do business like other people. Payments would be certain and regular, hence one would suppose that the sultan would look upon the plan favorably, for at present he receives a comparatively small amount of the taxes wrung from the Jews. Most of the money sticks to the hands of his subordinates.

The Jews think that such an arrangement would be greatly for their welfare, provided other restrictions now imposed upon them were removed, so that they could buy land, invest capital, establish industries and engage in business enterprises. This would make them practically independent, like the Maronites in Syria, who have their own officials and pay their taxes in lump. The Druses are demanding the same privileges, and will be restless until they obtain them, and if the Maronites and Druses are given semi-independence there is no reason why the Jews should not enjoy the same benefits. It would be a great thing for Palestine, and go far to realize Zionism.

But the sultan is very suspicious. He talks favor-



ably, but does nothing, for the arrangement proposed is in direct violation of his policy of suppression. It would give the Jews wealth, which would give them power, which would make them independent and aggressive, whereas they will remain submissive if kept poor. The policy of the sultan's government is against all public and private improvements and progress of every kind. It is the strangest anomaly in the twentieth century—a sovereign who prefers his people to be poor, wretched and ignorant, because he can govern them best that way. If they were otherwise they might not submit to his tyranny. They would have money to buy arms and the spirit to resist, and would be likely to attract the attention and provoke the intervention of other nations. Another unsurmountable objection is the dissatisfaction such an arrangement would cause among the officials, who now are able to line their pockets by blackmail, and other exactions. The sultan is afraid of them; and he realizes that any scheme which would protect the Jews from their rapacity would be exceedingly unpopular. Therefore those who are familiar with the disposition of Abdul Hamid have no confidence that he will consent to Dr. Herzl's scheme.

The saddest sight in Jerusalem is the wailing of the Jews over the ruins of the temple. It has become a good deal of a formality, however, and attracts large numbers of spectators, who sit around upon benches prepared for them, laughing, smoking and taking snap shots with their kodaks in an irreverent way, while a touching custom, which has prevailed for centuries, is observed. The wailing place is at an ancient gate called the Gate of the Prophets, and under a retaining wall erected by the Romans, probably upon foun-



dations laid by Solomon to sustain the terrace upon which the great temple stood. It is partially hidden by excavations, and reached by a narrow winding road through the Jewish quarter. The ceremony takes place every Friday afternoon between 4 o'clock and sundown, and also upon certain festivals, when 200 or 300 Jews assemble, many of them barefooted and in sackcloth and ashes, and weep and wail, kiss the stones of the wall and bemoan the downfall of Jerusalem.

All Jews were expelled from Jerusalem after their revolt during the reign of the Emperor Hadrian, and were not allowed to enter the city until the time of Constantine, 200 years later. He permitted them to enter it once a year on the anniversary of its destruction by Titus for the purpose of weeping over the ruins of the temple, and for this privilege they were obliged to pay heavy blackmail to the Roman governors. In course of time the wailing ceremony was permitted once each week in return for larger payments, until it became a fixed practice, and ever since the Jews have met and gone through with a ritual, which includes portions of the Old Testament, the Psalms of David and the Lamentations of Jeremiah. The litany runs something as follows:

Rabbi—For the palace that lies desolate.

Response—We sit in solitude and mourn.

Rabbi—For the palace that is destroyed.

Response—We sit in solitude and mourn, etc.

Rabbi—Jehovah, we pray Thee, have mercy on Zion.

Response—Have mercy, have mercy; oh, gather the children of Jerusalem.

Rabbi—Haste, oh! haste, Redeemer of Zion.

Response—Comfort the hearts of Jerusalem.

The Jews who participate in this ceremony are very old and have a patriarchal appearance. You seldom

see a young man in the company of mourners, and the Spanish Jews can be distinguished from those from Poland and Russia by their dress. Their general appearance is much superior. Several families in Jerusalem claim to have lived there from the time of David, but their pretensions are denied by others, and it is the prevailing belief among the most learned historians that none of them date farther back than the fifteenth century. The Jewish population at Jerusalem has been practically exterminated several times in the Christian era. Farther north, Tiberius, Safed and other towns which were fortunate enough to escape the ravages of the crusaders, the Saracens and the Turks, have remained undisturbed from the time of the exodus from Egypt. Their people preserve the ancient customs and are tenacious in following the habits of the race. The Jews living east of the Jordan are even older. There many families live upon the same lands that were assigned them by Joshua. But the Arabs are still older. They are descended from Ishmael and Esau and have remained with their flocks and herds in the pastures taken up by their patriarchal ancestors. The Druses are the descendants of the ancient Phoenicians and still worship the same gods.

Mr. Zangwill has written a series of earnest articles upon the commercial opportunities of Palestine, intended to demonstrate the practicability of Zionism and to prove that there is plenty of room and plenty of opportunities in the Holy Land for hundreds of thousands of Jews now scattered throughout the rest of the world. Although I cannot confirm all Mr. Zangwill's statistics and arguments, there is nevertheless a great deal of truth in them, and under certain conditions his sanguine hopes for his race might be realized. It is



true, as he states, that a large area in the valley of the Jordan might be devoted to sugar cane, but he does not appear to have realized that immense sums of money must be expended upon the construction of irrigation systems, which have so far baffled engineering skill. The scarcity of water is an insurmountable drawback; the bed of the Jordan is so much below the surface that pumping machines would be required to lift the water up to distributing reservoirs. It is also true that the climate along the Jordan is almost intolerable and cannot be endured by people who are not born there. Similar objections may be raised to nearly all of the hopeful propositions which Mr. Zangwill advances. But the experiment could be fairly tried by the expenditure of less than half as much money as has been wasted upon the colonization scheme of Baron Rothschild and other Jewish philanthropists.

Jerusalem is a great place for cranks, particularly those of religious tendencies. People who have visions and possess the gift of prophecy, who have discovered new ways of salvation and methods by which they may live without sin, seem to flock here as the moths seek the light. Some come in clubs and associations, others as individuals. Many of them are actually insane and possessed of peculiar delusions. There used to be an old sailor here who went around through the principal streets day after day carrying a heavy cross. He was doing penance for some great sin he had committed, and it would be a satisfaction to know whether he obtained absolution before he died. Then there was a man who bought a lamb every morning and sacrificed it, giving the skin and the meat to the poor. His place of sacrifice was on a rock out-



side the walls, and a crowd was there awaiting him whenever he came with his offering upon his back.

There is an old woman in Jerusalem now—and she is said to be rich, for she lives in a comfortable house and seems to have plenty of money—who considers it her mission to relieve the hunger and the distress of all the Ishmaelitish dogs. She goes out daily with baskets of bread and meat to feed them, and if she can catch one of the mongrel curs with which the streets are haunted she takes him home, washes him with carbolic acid and other disinfectants and then turns him loose. But she never gets the same dog twice. Although they like the food she brings them, they do not relish the other attentions.

The Moslems, like the North American Indians, consider a lunatic sacred, and any man who comes here with marked eccentricities is absolutely safe, safer than if he had an escort of the sultan's bodyguard.

An Englishman, named Graybill, owns a large estate upon the slopes of Mount Olivet, where he has a handsome residence and spends much of his time. He is opposed to Christian missionaries and cultivates the Mohammedans, although he does not profess their faith. He gives his money freely for the relief of Mohammedan miseries, but will not contribute to any Christian cause. Not long ago the Arabs in a neighboring village, being deeply in debt, were about to be sold out. They came to him for advice and assistance. He furnished them sufficient funds to meet all their obligations and to improve their town.

The late Lord Bute, a famous English nobleman, who is supposed to have sat for the portrait of Lothair in Lord Beaconsfield's novel, and was a Roman Catholic, also owned a fine estate on Mount Olivet, with a

little chapel attached to his villa. When he died his heart was placed in an urn upon the altar and his body was buried in Scotland.

Father Euthuynus, abbot of the Greek monks, is the richest man in Jerusalem, and has some of the talents of Midas, according to the popular impression, as everything he touches turns to gold. He is a famous speculator and is credited with making large sums of money upon the bourses of Paris and Vienna. He owns large tracts of land in the neighborhood of Jerusalem and blocks of houses both inside and outside the walls. Nearly all of the tenements in the Zion suburb and the handsome residences around the Russian hospice belong to him, and it is expected that upon his death his entire estate will go to the Greek church.

Father Euthuynus has recently had a setback, however. Through the Russian ambassador at Constantinople he obtained a firman from the sultan permitting him to place a steamboat upon the Dead Sea for the accommodation of tourists and for the transportation of freight in competition with the camel trains. The boat was built in Alexandria, transported to Jaffa in sections by steamer, and to Jerusalem by rail. Thence it was carted upon wagons to the shores of the Dead Sea, where it was put together, launched and found to be in fine working order. But the governor of the province forbade the good father to engage in the transportation business and called his attention to the terms of the firman granted him by the sultan. That document was perfectly clear. It gave Father Euthuynus permission to place a steamboat upon the Dead Sea, but did not authorize him to operate it, and the governor asserted that the latter proposition was to be decided solely by himself. On the ground



of high public policy he ordered the little steamboat to be tied up to a stake, because if it were allowed to carry freight it would interfere with the honest earnings of the camel drivers of Moab and the Valley of Jordan, and if it were allowed to be used by tourists it would ruin the Arab peasant who now owns a little sailboat which will carry four or five persons at a time and is used for that purpose. It was intimated to Brother Euthuynus that the governor might possibly review and perhaps reverse his original decision if certain suitable arguments were used, but the abbot tied up his money bags and thus far has declined to pay baksheesh. The governor was naturally offended at his independence, and it is believed that this little transaction was the beginning of a series of incidents which finally culminated in a riot at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in 1901 between the Greek and the Roman Catholic monks. The governor was held responsible by the sultan for that row, and upon the demand of the French ambassador at Constantinople was removed from office, but was immediately promoted to a higher rank and appointed to a more important post.

Under the auspices of the American Institute of Archeology, there has been recently established at Jerusalem a school for Oriental languages, Biblical history and archeology and for original investigation, which is especially advantageous to clergymen and others interested in Scripture study. Professor Shailer Matthews of the University of Chicago annually escorts a class of students through Palestine for a couple of months in the spring, visiting most of the important places, for the purpose of studying Biblical history upon the ground. But the American school is



intended to be permanent, and, under the direction of Prof. H. D. Mitchell of the theological faculty of Boston University, has already driven its stakes, begun work, and offers advantages which have never before been allowed American students in the Holy Land. The school is supported by twenty or thirty different universities, colleges and theological seminaries in the United States, which contribute a stated sum every year, and by voluntary gifts from individuals especially interested in its work. But I notice that most of the regular contributors are Eastern institutions. While the schools of archeology and history in Rome and Athens are mainly supported by Western enterprise in the United States, this Biblical school in Palestine has no contributors west of Cornell, except the Hebrew College at Cincinnati. An effort is being made to secure a permanent endowment of \$200,000, the income to be expended in original research in Palestine, explorations and excavations to be done under the direction of the American school.

The Germans are about to establish a similar school at Jerusalem under the auspices of the University of Berlin. The English already have one and are making some important excavations among the ruins of the old City of Gezer, which was given to Solomon by Pharaoh with his daughter as a bride's dowry. The story is told in the tenth chapter of Joshua. The students of the American College have the advantage of several other schools and museums at Jerusalem. The Greek patriarch offers them the privileges of his library, with a remarkable collection of manuscripts. The Dominican monks are doing much to encourage archeological investigation, and among them are some very active and able scholars. At their school

in Jerusalem courses of lectures are given every winter upon subjects connected with the history and antiquities of Palestine, to which the American students are invited. A Mohammedan school near the gate of Herod is also doing some good work, and several small museums recently started in the city will be found useful as well as interesting to inquirers into the prehistoric conditions in the Holy Land.

The trustees of the American College have not yet succeeded in securing an imperial irade authorizing their undertaking, and judging by the experience of others it will take them several years to do so. There are several prominent educational institutions of long standing, founded and conducted by foreigners, which have never received any official authorization nor suffered for the lack of it. Hence Dr. Mitchell is going ahead with his work just as if the imperial seal of the Ottoman Empire lay upon his writing desk. It is proposed to have two directors hereafter, one to remain in Jerusalem and supervise the work of the students there, and the other to have charge of the students in the field and direct archeological explorations. The usefulness of the institution, however, depends upon the liberality of its friends in contributing funds for its support.

Many young clergymen in the United States, and others also, for that matter, will be glad of an opportunity to spend a year or two in Palestine studying Biblical history and archeology under competent direction. The expense will not be great. They can reach Jerusalem from New York at a cost of not more than \$250, and can find comfortable homes here at an expense of not more than \$2 a day. They will not be able to enjoy the same comforts and luxuries they



have at home, and will be exposed to inconveniences and annoyances that will only add more energy and zeal in their work.

Over in the new part of Jerusalem, which is as different from the old part as one town may differ from another, are enormous hospitals, hospices and other institutions for the care of pilgrims; long streets of stores, shops and comfortable apartment houses, two or three stories in height, built upon modern plans with modern conveniences, like those of a German or a French city. The streets are kept comparatively clean; there are sewers and a good water supply. The roads are paved and the sidewalks laid with flagstones wide enough for two people to walk abreast. Some of the houses are surrounded by gardens that look very attractive, and occasionally through an open door one can catch a glimpse of an interior court with a fountain, palms and flowers, that is very alluring. In this new section of the city is located the "American colony," so-called, although it is composed of representatives of seven nations, and occupies a large house erected for the purpose, with several smaller houses around it. It is the headquarters of the religious sect known as "The Overcomers," which removed here from Chicago twenty years ago under the leadership of Dr. and Mrs. Spafford. They have since gained some notoriety at home because of legal proceedings over property which was claimed to have been bequeathed to the association by one of its members. The sect live as a community. When a person joins he or she is expected to surrender for the welfare of the whole all wealth and articles of value; the earnings of every member go into a common pool, from which the expenses of the community are paid pro rata,



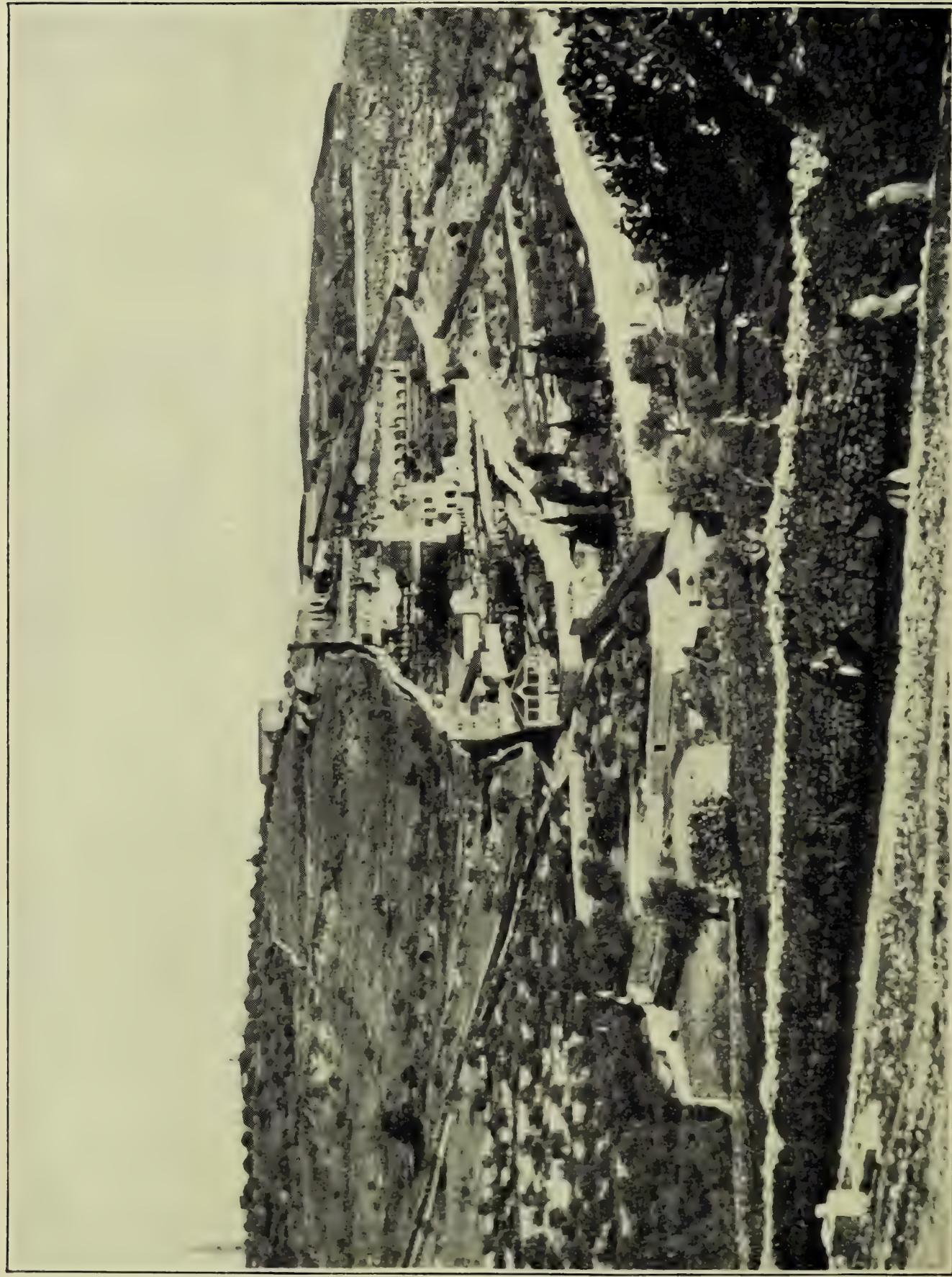
without any special rule. There is no organization, no formally elected officials, no directors, no by-laws or regulations, but everybody is on an equality and is expected to do the best he can for the general good. The community has a store downtown, where tourists can find the best photographs, the best curios, costumes, coins and other souvenirs of the Holy Land, and they are entirely reliable. No misrepresentations are made, and there is only one price. In the ordinary shops of Jerusalem and other places in the Holy Land the statements of the native merchants can never be relied upon, and they always ask three or four times what an article is worth, because they expect to be beaten down. It is a custom of the country, but the American store is conducted on the American plan, and is therefore a satisfactory place to trade.

Members of the community, both men and women, are engaged in manufacturing articles for sale. They have a large photographic establishment to develop and make prints from negatives they have taken at all the points of interest in Palestine; they manufacture all kinds of musical instruments, weave linen and wool; they have a shoeshop and a bakery which is as neat as wax, an art room at which young girls are taught drawing and painting, to decorate china and other articles, and put up pressed flowers gathered at the holy places. They are altogether a very industrious little community of 140 people, of whom twenty are from Chicago and the remainder represent seven different nations, being mostly Germans and Swedes.

The community gets its name "Overcomers" from that passage in Revelation which says: "He that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the Tree of Life," and although their ideas of the marriage rela-







THE MOUNT OF OLIVES WITH THE TWO GARDENS OF GETHSEMANE IN THE FOREGROUND.



tion are a little confusing, they are given great credit by their neighbors for doing good, for nursing the sick, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and teaching the ignorant, without money, without price and without making any fuss about it. As I understand it, the marriage relation is recognized as it exists, but the younger members of the community are not encouraged to marry—at least Mrs. Spafford, the leader, tells me so—and if that principle prevails, of course the institution will sooner or later die out.

The Turkish authorities evidently approve of the "Overcomers," for some of the most prominent government officials are frequent visitors at their attractive home, which offers a smiling contrast to the filthy streets and gloomy monasteries. I called there one Sunday afternoon and found the whole colony gathered in groups, drinking tea, eating cakes, singing songs and enjoying instrumental music. They seem to be happy and contented and to be enjoying their share of prosperity.

In 1865 a French princess, Latour d'Auvergne, cousin of the late Emperor Louis Napoleon, erected a chapel upon the Mount of Olives and surrounded it with a beautiful cloister, in the walls of which are imbedded forty-five marble tablets having the Lord's prayer engraved upon them in as many different languages. This graceful and novel monument is supposed to stand upon the spot where Jesus sat when He taught the Lord's prayer to His disciples and upon the site of another chapel built in 1100, during the crusade, which was afterward destroyed by the Moslems. In the center of the court is a life-size marble statue representing the princess, and it was intended that she should be buried beneath it, but she died in France,

and for some reason or another her body was never removed here. Adjoining the chapel is a small nunnery, also erected by the Princess Latour, who endowed it handsomely and provided a sufficient income to support the sisters in comfort perpetually, but somehow or another the funds have been misappropriated or misplaced, and the sisters are in great financial distress.

At the Pool of Bethesda, where the miracle of healing the impotent man occurred, is a similar series of tablets inscribed in forty-five different languages, with an account of the miracle as related in the fifth chapter of John, with which I hope everybody is familiar. The pool is now called Birket Israel, and it is an immense reservoir 360 by 130 feet in size, and it is seventy feet from the top to the rubbish that has accumulated at the bottom. No doubt this is the same pool that stood by the sheep market in the days of Jesus, where a great number of impotent folk, blind, halt and withered, waited for the angel that went down at a certain time daily and troubled the water. We can see how difficult it must have been for the impotent man to get into the pool first when everybody would naturally rush down before him.

The gate through which Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem is now walled up. It has been closed ever since the time of the crusaders, but at one period, when there was a liberal-minded Moslem governor in Jerusalem, it used to be opened once a year, on Palm Sunday, to permit a procession to pass through; but it is now sealed forever, or for as long as Moslem rule continues in Palestine. There is a superstition among the Moslems that Jesus will again come through that gate "at the end of the age," as He

did before, and will take possession not only of Jerusalem but of the whole world. Said Isa, our learned guide:

“Mohammed he wall him up; wall him up solid. He say if he open gate he lose his mosque and everything else, and he believe that so, so he wall him up.”

The gate is rich in names. In the days of the apostles it was known as “The Beautiful Gate,” where the lame man whom Peter healed was placed daily to ask alms. The crusaders called it *Porta Aurea*—“the Golden Gate”—and that is commonly used to-day. The Arabic name is “The Eternal Gate,” but others call it the “Gate of Mercy,” and still more the “Gate of Repentance.”





XXI

The Tomb of the Redeemer





## XXI

### THE TOMB OF THE REDEEMER

Everybody who visits Jerusalem wants to go first of all places to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the center and focus of interest of the Christian world. From the foreign quarter of the city it is reached through a series of narrow and dirty streets, the pavements being slippery with unspeakable filth, and the stench nauseating. Garbage, slops and all kinds of unspeakable offal is dumped into the middle of the street by the householders for the dogs to eat, the camels to trample down and the rains to wash away, without considering the public health or comfort. You pass through the big bazaars, which are roofed over and lined with little shops, and the men who keep them have "barkers" out to entice you to stop and examine their goods. At the foot of a sloping pathway between two formidable walls you come to a little plaza paved with marble flags to which you descend by a flight of three steps. Squatting upon the pavement are rows of beggars with all sorts of deformities and diseases, beseeching every one for alms, muttering blessings upon those who respond and curses on those who refuse. On the other side of the plaza in similar postures are peddlers selling beads that will protect you from the evil eye, rosaries to count your prayers on, crosses and other relics made of mother of pearl, olive wood and ivory, and all sorts of medals, amulets and trinkets of a religious character. Most of these goods are manufactured at Bethlehem and Hebron.

It is bad enough that a Mohammedan Turk should be the custodian of the scene of the crucifixion and keep the keys of His tomb, and one is shocked by a sense of indignation when he passes into the church and notices a squad of Turks squatting on a divan in a deep recess at the left of the vestibule with expressions of contempt and scorn upon their faces. They smoke their pipes, play cards and other games, gossip and tell stories, and wander about the sacred shrine with a careless indifference, shoving priests as well as pilgrims aside in the rudest manner and exercising an air of authority that is exasperating. Perhaps after all it is an evidence of the wisdom of providence that the central and supreme shrine of the Christian church should be in the possession and under the authority of Islam. The bitterness of the envy and rivalry of the sects is so great that none of them could be trusted to treat the others fairly if a Christian sect were in control, and, although their manners are often offensive, the Moslems for a thousand years have always acted impartially and kept the scene of the burial and the resurrection of the Savior open to all on equal terms. Years ago they imposed a tax of one franc upon every person who entered the church, but the admission fee has been abolished. Under their rule the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is the only sacred shrine and the only Christian edifice in any of the holy cities to which the multitudes of the earth, the tribes and the peoples of all faiths, can come and with equal rights kneel at the altar and offer prayer and praise in their own languages and according to their own rituals. This could not be said if the place were controlled by any of the different denominations. That we must admit. And it is true that, except among the Mos-



lems, there is no religious toleration in the East. The Turk is tolerant to a certain degree, because he is supreme and indifferent to the consequences, and so long as Christians have so little of the spirit of Christ as to quarrel over His tomb, perhaps it is better that its custody be intrusted to an impartial pagan.

The office of custodian is hereditary in a Jerusalem family, having been conferred upon it by one of the sultans several centuries ago. Their compensation is paid by the different religious sects. The priests consider it in the light of blackmail, for it is very irksome, but they ought to be thankful that they get off as easy as they do, because the government will protect the custodian in anything he chooses to demand. If the number of pilgrims is large and the receipts of the religious orders are increased his remuneration is proportional. They cannot resist. They are compelled to pay or he will shut them out altogether, but he is generally very reasonable and courteous, and both Greek and Franciscan monks assured me that they have nothing to complain of in this respect.

It is a matter of necessity, too, to have a military guard to keep the peace among the pilgrims as well as among the priests. Many of the pilgrims are so bigoted and fanatical as to regard those of other denominations as heretics, hypocrites, unregenerate sons of Satan and enemies of God and man. The Greek and Roman Catholic monks, the Armenians and the Copts, the Maronites and Druses, show the fiercest spirit and scowl at each other whenever they meet. Each sect has its hours for worship at the sepulcher, and the custodian and his military guard protect them from interference. Each has its own separate chapel, and the limits are plainly and sharply defined so there



need be no accidental collisions. The Greeks have the largest and finest chapel; the Roman Catholics have several, although they are comparatively small; the Copts, Armenians, Syrians and Abyssinians have smaller chapels. The Syrian chapel is said to have been the burial place of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa.

No Jews are allowed to enter the Holy Church. When they pass by outside they draw their cloaks around them and turn their eyes the other way for fear of insult. Many fanatics among the pilgrims, and particularly among the Russians, would not hesitate to assault or kill a Jew if they thought he showed a lack of reverence.

The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is inappropriate, insignificant and actually unsafe. The decorations are cheap, common and untasteful, although everybody will concede that the sepulcher of our Lord should be the sublimest masterpiece of architecture, and be adorned in the highest type of art and with the most costly embellishment. St. Peter's at Rome is not too vast or magnificent an expression of the idea that I am trying to convey. The building that shelters the tomb should be as beautiful as the Mosque of Omar, here in Jerusalem, or St. Sophia at Constantinople, or that exquisite temple of stained glass and carved wood and chiseled marble, La Chappelle, which Louis the Great built in Paris for the relics gathered by Charlemagne. The Christian world would contribute abundant funds to build a tabernacle worthy of its wealth and its numbers, to replace the present one, if it could be built. It should be strong and perfect; it should be costly and immortal; it should be of marble and gold. The dome of the present sepulcher has been pronounced

unsafe; and although it has been repaired several times, it never can be a perfectly built piece of architecture.

But whatever may be offensive to our sense of propriety and good taste in the Church of the Resurrection, however evil passions and jealousies may rage, however superstitious may be the rites and ceremonies performed there, yet during eighteen hundred years it has stood as a monument and a commemoration of certain events in the history of the Christian religion, which have invested it with a sanctity and a significance that no other building on earth can ever possess. Think of the millions of pilgrims that have knelt in this shrine; think of the millions of prayers that have been uttered here, the oceans of tears that have been shed and the jubilees of joy and triumph that have burst from the hearts of believers under this crumbling old dome.

The sepulcher itself is within a little chapel of white marble twenty-six feet long and eighteen feet wide. It is divided into two small rooms. The first, which is a sort of an ante-chamber, is called the Chapel of the Angel, and the entrance is so small that you have to stoop as you pass in. Here is shown the great stone which the angels rolled away on the morning of the resurrection, and it is shielded from destruction by a glass case. The pilgrims kiss the glass. If they were allowed to kiss the stone it would be soon worn away. The glass has to be replaced frequently. Another very small door admits the visitor into the Chapel of the Sepulcher, which is only six and a half feet long by six feet wide, and entirely encased in beautiful marble. The actual resting place of the body of Christ is a chiseled niche in the stone wall, lined



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with marble veneering, and beside it stands a priest who drops sacred oil or sprinkles holy water upon the heads of the pilgrims as they stoop to kiss the spot where the Savior lay. From the ceiling, which is quite low, hang forty-three lamps of silver and gold, always burning, that belong to the different churches which have the right to worship at this shrine. Holes have been pierced in the ceiling to allow the smoke to escape, but the heat from the lamps gives the little room a very high temperature and perspiration was pouring from the face of the monk who stood there performing the sacred offices when I entered.

These two little chapels are open to all and the representatives of each of the several churches preside there at certain hours of the day. Two Mohammedan soldiers with guns at their shoulders are always at the entrance in case their services should be needed.

There are many other interesting places in the church, some of which are apt to be questioned by people of inquiring mind. Near the entrance is what is called the stone of unction, a slab of flesh-colored marble eight and one-half feet long and four feet broad, upon which it is claimed that the body of Christ was prepared for burial. It is customary for pilgrims to bring the shrouds in which they intend to be buried in order to consecrate them by rubbing the cloth upon this slab, and the priests upon application furnish shrouds that have been so sanctified. Near by they show you the spot where the holy mother stood with Mary Magdalene and St. John, the beloved disciple, while the body of her son was being anointed and wrapped in cerements.

They show you the Chapel of the Apparition which stands where Jesus appeared to His mother after the



resurrection; the Chapel of the Parting of the Raiment, which belongs to the Armenians; the Chapel of the Crown of Thorns; the Chapel of the Cross, which is forty-two feet long and fifteen feet wide. In the floor are said to be the actual places where the three crosses stood, five feet apart, the holes in the rock being lined with silver; the Chapel of the Two Thieves marks the place where they were nailed to their crosses, and beneath them is the Chapel of Adam, in which the father of all men is said to have been buried.

The idea that Adam was buried on Calvary prevailed extensively in early times, and is mentioned by several of the early writers of the church, but one feels reluctant to believe or even to repeat the tradition that the blood of Jesus flowed through a cleft in the rock upon the head of Adam and restored him to life.

There are several other chapels, some of them underground, that which has the greatest interest being the one in which the holy cross was discovered by the Empress Helena. Another point of interest is a stone called "the navel of the world," which is supposed to mark the exact center of the universe; and here, too, we find another stone upon which Abraham attempted to sacrifice Isaac, the third to be seen in Jerusalem. There is a pillar that perspires, and the moisture from it will cure almost any disease. We saw the tombs of Melchizedek, Godfrey de Bouillon and Baldwin I., the crusaders. Perhaps the latter are the only two objects in the church whose authenticity can be established beyond question. Godfrey, the hero of the first crusade, was elected king of Jerusalem, but declined that title. He said that where the Savior wore a crown of thorns he could not wear a crown of gold. He called himself "The Baron of the Holy Sepulcher." He

died, or is supposed to have been poisoned, in the year 1100, when only thirty-eight years of age, and was buried here. His sword, spurs and the crucifix he wore are preserved in the Roman Catholic chapel.

I cannot engage in the controversy as to the site of the sepulcher of Christ, although it seems to me, as it does to many others, that the generally accepted location does not correspond in any respect with the ambiguous descriptions contained in the gospel accounts of the crucifixion; but that question has been argued for sixteen centuries and is no nearer a settlement than when the discussion began. There are distinguished authorities on both sides. The evidence is meager and contradictory, and the topography of the country has probably been more or less altered.

We are informed by the evangelists that Golgotha lay outside the city walls and was a small rocky eminence, so called on account of its resemblance to a skull. The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is in the center of modern Jerusalem and upon the slope of Mount Moriah. The remainder of the city, north and west of it, is considerably higher. In fact, you descend quite a steep hill to reach it. It is possible, of course, that the configuration of the land may have been considerably different twenty centuries ago and that the present location may have been outside the walls, but if that is true the ancient city of Jerusalem was a very insignificant place and could not have contained a small fraction of the population generally attributed to it. Even the area encircled by the present walls is much smaller than one would expect to find after reading the descriptions of early writers.

What is known as "Gordon's Tomb," a little hillock just outside the Gate of Damascus, seems to answer



the description of Golgotha admirably in several respects, and so eminent an authority as Dr. Merrill, the United States consul, who has devoted his life to the study of this and kindred questions, is inclined to believe that it is the actual site of the crucifixion. He has made excavations there, to which are due several important discoveries which confirm his opinion. He believes that the Savior carried His cross from the Hall of Judgment, whose site is now occupied by a military barracks, not by the narrow and crooked lane known as Via Dolorosa, to the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, but along the broad military road which runs through the Damascus Gate to what is now known as the "Gordon Tomb."

On the other hand, the most distinguished writers and theologians of the Greek, Roman, Armenian and Protestant churches adhere to the authenticity of the present location.

General Charles Gordon, the hero of Khartum, a brave soldier and Christian gentleman, was so impressed with the site outside the walls when he was taken there many years ago by Dr. Merrill that he wrote several magazine articles to prove its claims. Hence his name became attached to the site, and it is called "Gordon's Tomb" in the guide books. It is an abrupt, rocky cliff about sixty feet above the roadway and apparently of solid rock. One side is almost perpendicular and looks as if it had been blasted off like a quarry. The other side is a gradual slope from the pastures beyond the city. Upon the rocky side it is easy to trace the likeness of a skull, a bold forehead and a large jaw, two regular cavities in the rock for the eyes, two more for the mouth and the nose, and after you have looked a little while the picture fascinates



you. There is no evidence or reason to believe that this rough surface has been changed in the slightest degree since the date of the crucifixion.

At the foot of the cliff Dr. Merrill discovered some years ago several graves chiseled out of the solid rock. One of them is a chamber of considerable size, evidently intended as a family tomb, with niches for three bodies carved in the walls, one at the end and two, one over the other, at right angles. The other tombs are not so large, but are of similar construction. It is believed that the larger one belonged to Joseph of Arimathæa and that one of the niches "was the place where the Lord lay."

The opinion of General Gordon attracted so much attention in England that a Miss Louise Hope was attracted to Jerusalem and afterwards to Constantinople, where, through the intervention of the British ambassador, she succeeded in purchasing the property, and placed it in the hands of a board of trustees consisting of herself, the Duke of Argyle, the Marquis of Northampton, the Earl of Aberdeen and the Rev. Canon Tristram. She also contributed a sum of money which has been used in clearing up the place, building a wall around it, laying out a garden, erecting a keeper's lodge and putting it in excellent order. It is now in the charge of a Scotch caretaker, who explains to visitors the evidences in favor of that hill as the site of the crucifixion.

According to Bishop Eusebius of Cæsarea, who lived from the year 264 to 340 A. D. and is the earliest reliable historian of the church, the tomb of the Savior was discovered by the Empress Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine, who made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the year 336. Prompted by a vision she and

Bishop Macarius, by the aid of a miracle, also discovered the true cross, which was buried in a cave adjoining the tomb of Joseph of Arimathæa. St. Helena built a sumptuous chapel over the tomb in the year 336, upon the ruins of a temple of Venus erected by Hadrian, for until her time the tomb beneath had been used in connection with the worship of that goddess. She also discovered the cross upon which the repentant thief was executed.

Both these crosses, according to the local traditions of the Christians at Jerusalem, were hidden away in the ground by the disciples and their friends to preserve them. In order to test the genuineness of the true cross a dying woman was laid upon it and instantly recovered her health. In 383 St. Jerome described the church and the cross. They are described by Rufinus in 410 and again by Theodoret in 440. In 614 the church was destroyed by the Persians, but was rebuilt in 620 with additions. Two centuries later it was destroyed by fire. In 1010 it was pulled to the ground by the Moslems, but was rebuilt, enlarged and beautified by the crusaders. In 1187, in 1244 and 1310 it was also destroyed, being rebuilt each time, and has met with various other damages and disasters. In 1808 it was almost entirely burned down, the dome fell in, the chapel of the sepulcher was crushed and nothing was saved except the east part of the building, where traces of the original walls may still be distinguished.

The Greeks contrived to secure for themselves the larger part of the church when it was rebuilt in 1810 by contributing most of the funds to pay the expenses. For a long time the dome threatened to fall, but in 1868, after long negotiations, an understanding was



reached between Louis Napoleon of France, representing the Roman Catholics; Alexander II. of Russia, representing the Orthodox Greeks, and the liberal Sultan Abdul Azziz of Turkey, under which it was repaired by a French architect at the expense of the sovereigns named. The original dome was secured by iron braces and a false dome was built above to protect it. The inner side of the lower dome was lined with lead, the exterior of the upper dome was covered with boards, then with felt, and lastly with lead.

These braces were intended to be only temporary. It was expected that after further negotiations between the representatives of the Greek and Latin churches, under the patronage of Louis Napoleon, that an agreement would be reached by which the entire church could be restored, but the Franco-Prussian war, occurring a few years later, terminated the reign of Louis Napoleon, and since that time nothing has been done.

The dome is said to be a wreck. The plaster frequently falls down from the ceiling, and competent architects who have made examinations have declared that the chapel of the sepulcher is again in continual danger of being crushed by its feeble and crumbling canopy of iron, stone and lead.

It was expected that the visit of Kaiser William to the Holy Land in 1898 would be followed by important concessions to Protestants in Jerusalem, but nothing has happened yet. Among other things it was understood that a representative of the sultan would present to the emperor with solemn ceremony the Cænaculum, the building in which the Last Supper is said to have taken place. This building has been in the possession of the Turks for a thousand years, ever since the crusades, and Christian pilgrims are not per-



mitted to enter its walls. Some years ago a cardinal archbishop of the Roman Catholic church was actually refused the privilege of erecting an altar and celebrating mass there on a certain Good Friday. Tourists can get in by the liberal use of baksheesh. We went with a dragoman from the hotel and were admitted, but it costs much money, and the children of the custodian called us vile names while we were there.

The appearance of the room does not justify confidence in the story. It is a heavily arched and vaulted chamber, such as you find in the crypts of ancient castles and cathedrals, and adjoins what is said to be the Tomb of David. It seems almost certain that if the Last Supper had occurred in such close proximity to the grave of the great king of Israel, that fact would have been mentioned in the story as told by the disciples.

Christians are not permitted to see the tomb, which is also controlled by the Moslems, but in an adjoining room are shown a model upon the payment of three piasters. The original has occasionally been seen by foreigners of influence [through the favor of the governor, and one who "saw it recently tells me that the model is very much like the original, except that it is not so richly embellished. The tomb is an immense sarcophagus of rough stone covered with a pall of green satin tapestry embroidered with inscriptions from the Koran in gold. Above it is a canopy of brilliant colors, also embroidered, and two candles and a little lamp stand near by, and are always kept burning. The wall and the ceiling of the room are veneered with tiles.

It is possible that this is the genuine tomb of David,

for his sepulcher appears to have been known at the time of Christ. On the day of Pentecost Peter spoke of it, saying, "His sepulcher is with us unto this day." The present tomb has been venerated continuously since the time of the Empress Helena, and has not been lost sight of since. Josephus tells that Hyrcanus, the high priest, robbed it of 3,000 talents, with which to bribe Antiochus to abandon the siege of Jerusalem, and that Herod the Great attempted to find an immense store of gold in the sarcophagus, but was driven out of the tomb by miraculous flames of fire.

Before Emperor William went to Jerusalem it was published that the sultan had decided to present the Cænaculum to him, but the story appears to have been untrue. The chief object of the kaiser's visit was to participate in the dedication of a new German Lutheran church, by far the handsomest piece of modern architecture in Palestine, which occupies the site of the ancient temple of the Order of Hospitalers and Knights of St. John, presented to the late Emperor Frederick by the Sultan Abdul Azziz. The gift embraced nearly a block of ground, which is still covered with the ruins of the hospice of St. John, and is one of the best locations in the city, being not more than a hundred yards from the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Jerusalem suffered a thorough cleansing before the war lord of Germany came, and as I have already told you, new roads were constructed to various points of interest for his benefit. It was discovered long afterward that he had invited representatives of the several evangelical denominations in the United States, but only the Lutherans were represented. Through the stupidity of some aid-de-camp or clerk the invitations



were addressed to "the Superintendent of the Presbyterian Church, United States of America" and "To the Superintendent of the Baptist Church, United States of America," and, of course, were not delivered. It appears that the aid-de-camp did not have sense enough to get the proper addresses at the American embassy. The address of the Lutherans was obtained from the court chaplain of Berlin, and of course was correct.

The Via Dolorosa, by which the Savior is said to have borne His cross to Calvary, or the "Way to the Cross," is a narrow, crooked lane leading from military barracks which are supposed to occupy the former sight of the *prætorium*, the residence of Pilate, to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The authenticity of this tradition, of course, is linked with that referring to the site of the crucifixion, and if one is true the other must be also. The Via Dolorosa is marked with tablets which divide the journey of the Savior from the judgment hall to the sepulcher in fourteen stations, each station representing some incident that occurred upon that memorable day. These stations are recognized by all the Christian denominations and are used to regulate the movements of their processions upon religious anniversaries.

The first is the chapel of the barracks of the Turkish garrison, where the hall of judgment is supposed to have stood, and from this place was taken the Scala Santa, the flight of marble stairs now at the Church of St. John Lateran, in Rome. The second station, where the cross was laid upon Christ, is at the entrance to the barracks, and there an arch which crosses the street is said to mark the spot upon which Pilate stood when he said: "Take ye Him and crucify Him, for I



find no fault in Him." The third station is at a hospice for pilgrims under the charge of Armenian monks. Here Christ is said to have sunk under the weight of the cross. A few yards beyond this station is the house of the poor man Lazarus. At the next street corner, where the Via Dolorosa turns to the west, a picturesque medieval residence is pointed out as the house of Dives, the rich man, but there is indisputable evidence that it was built no earlier than the fifteenth century. Opposite is the fifth station, where Simon of Cyrene relieved Christ of the cross, and a depression in the wall is pointed out as the place where the hand of Christ rested when He steadied Himself. About one hundred paces farther on, a chapel of the United Greeks, marks the site of the residence and tomb of Saint Veronica, who is said to have wiped the perspiration from the Savior's brow and to have received a permanent impression of His face upon her handkerchief. The handkerchief is in St. Peter's Cathedral, at Rome. This is the sixth station. The seventh marks where Christ fell a second time, and there is a modern chapel adjoining the hospice of St. John. The eighth station, where Christ is said to have addressed the women who accompanied Him, is at the Greek monastery of St. Caralombos. The ninth is in front of the Coptic monastery. The last five stations are in the Church of the Sepulcher, marking the places where Christ is said to have been undressed, where He was nailed to the cross, where the cross was erected, where He was taken down from the cross, and lastly the tomb in which He was laid.

It is absolutely demonstrated by competent archeologists that not a foot of the walls on either side of the Via Dolorosa existed at the time of the crucifixion,





HOUSE OF PILATE, JERUSALEM.



although it is possible that they may rest upon the foundations that are so old. The pavement is irregular, slippery, covered with filth and blocked with heaps of stone and rubbish, which appears to have been lying there indefinitely. The present governor occupies a part of the building said to have been the residence of Pilate, although that is questionable.

A few months after the crucifixion fortune began to frown upon Pilate and he was sent back to Rome in disgrace. One of the so-called messiahs who sprang up in Judea after the crucifixion informed the people of Samaria that he knew where the sacred treasures of the Jews were hidden and invited them to meet him on Gerizim, the Holy Mount, to dig them up. Pilate sent a detachment of troops to protect the synagogues there, which had a collision with the populace and killed several hundred people. The Samaritans dispatched commissioners to Antioch with complaints of cruelty, injustice and tyranny, and Vitellius, the viceroy, who had been continually annoyed by disturbances in Judea since the crucifixion and was becoming very nervous over the consequences that might follow, ordered Pilate to report to the authorities at Rome. The latter does not seem to have been successful in re-establishing confidence, for, deprived of power and honors, he retired to Switzerland and is said to have spent the remainder of his life in seclusion and remorse upon the summit of a mountain which bears his name, near the Lake of Luzerne.

There is a narrow stone stairway built into the wall on the outside of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher which leads from the plaza in front of it to what is known as the Chapel of the Agony and the Chapel of the Cross, believed to occupy the actual Calvary, which

is perhaps twenty-five feet above the rest of the church. These chapels belong to the Roman Catholic church and are in charge of Franciscan monks, but the entrance has not been used for many generations, and the stairway is practically useless. The Mohammedan custodian of the sepulcher is required to keep the plaza outside the church in good order, and the Franciscan monks complained to him in November, 1901, that the stairway was not properly swept. He replied that if he did not keep it clean enough to suit them they were at liberty to sweep it themselves, and, acting upon this suggestion, a Franciscan monk went out with a broom one morning, brushed down the stairs and swept the pavement at the bottom.

This little act caused intense indignation among the Greek monks, because, in Oriental countries, the act of sweeping has a significance. No man sweeps anything but his own house, and the Greek monks interpreted the act of the Franciscans as a demonstration of serious importance, as if they intended to enforce their claims to the stairway and to the plaza around it. Every inch of the area of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and its surroundings is so precious and the representatives of the different religious sects are so jealous of their own rights and territory that a violent controversy occurred at once and the father superior of the Franciscans and the Greek patriarch exchanged communications of a very heated character.

Both appealed to the custodian, and the latter referred them to the governor of Jerusalem, who is always amused when the Christians quarrel, and, instead of trying to settle the dispute amicably, did all in his power to provoke animosities on both sides. He practically told them that they could fight it out



among themselves, and gave the Franciscans permission to sweep the steps or the plaza or any other place they pleased. But the Greek bishop sent the Franciscans warning that they would not be permitted to do anything of the kind.

On the following morning, when a Franciscan lay brother went out with his broom to sweep the steps, he was attended by almost all the monks in the monastery. They were unarmed, but determined to support and defend him if the Greeks attempted to interfere with his sweeping. The latter, who are not always actuated by the spirit of brotherly love taught and exemplified by their Great Master, climbed to the flat roof of the church and hurled a volley of stones as large as cocoanuts upon the heads of the Catholic monks below. Twenty of the latter were stricken senseless and lay on the pavement as if dead, and it is claimed that the Greeks had fireballs, made of inflammable cloth soaked with kerosene, which they intended to throw after the stones, but their first volley did such execution upon the unsuspecting Franciscans that the Greeks were themselves frightened and came running down from the roof to see whether the Franciscans who lay upon the pavement were actually dead. As they emerged from the door the Franciscans who were uninjured set upon them with fury, and there was a brief but ineffective struggle. The pavement of the entire plaza was covered with monks in black and monks in gray frocks, fighting, wrestling and screaming. In a hand-to-hand fight the Franciscans had the advantage, for they wear coarse frocks of camel's hair and their heads are shaven, while the Greek monks wear their hair long, have bushy beards, and their gowns are of silk and other fine fabrics.



The custodian of the sepulcher summoned the military guard, the contestants were separated and the insensible Franciscans were carried to the nearest hospital. All of them recovered, and the only permanent damage was suffered by one of the Greek monks, who had his nose bitten off and lost most of his hair and beard in the melee. The Franciscans appealed at once to the French consul, being under his protection. He reported the matter to the French ambassador at Constantinople. The latter went immediately to the sultan, who ordered an investigation, and, upon the demand of France, reprimanded and removed the governor of Jerusalem for encouraging or at least permitting the row and confirmed the Franciscans in their right to sweep the steps to the Chapel of Agony. But, with their usual vindictiveness, the Greek monks were determined to get even with the Franciscans without the intervention of the sultan, and made since such violent demonstrations toward them, and particularly toward the superior of that order, who is in charge here and enjoys the empty honor of the title "Custodian of the Holy Land," that the latter felt it necessary to call upon the governor for an escort to protect his person. Hence wherever he goes he is now accompanied by a Moslem guard and when he comes to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher to say mass or attend service is always surrounded by soldiers. Military guards have been maintained not only there but in the Roman Catholic chapel in the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem since November, 1901..

Emperor William of Germany, who is always on the alert for opportunities to serve his subjects, had his consul general at Jerusalem make a report concerning the fracas, and when he learned that several of the

Franciscans were of German birth, demanded the arrest, trial and punishment of the Greek monks who had assaulted them. Such a proceeding was unprecedented, but the sultan is in the habit of complying with every wish the kaiser may express, and promptly issued an order to the governor of Jerusalem, requiring the court to find a verdict before it left the bench. This precaution indicates that his majesty is aware of the practices of his representatives in Palestine and did not intend to give the Greek abbot a chance to bribe them. The trial was held. Thirty-four Greek monks were found guilty of assaulting the German Franciscans and sentenced to terms of imprisonment varying from four days to nine months. The proceedings created a profound sensation in Palestine. The Greeks were compelled to swallow their chagrin and submit.

This is not the first time that violent collisions have occurred between the representatives of the two denominations at Jerusalem. The fight has been going on since the fifth century. The mother of the Emperor Constantine built the first church over the sepulcher, and when the great division of the church occurred, both factions claimed the right of possession and have been fighting for it ever since. So far back as 1342 a traveler, writing of his experience in Jerusalem, describes the disgraceful outbreaks among the Christian brotherhoods, and Rev. Henry Maundrell, who visited Jerusalem in 1695, says that the privileges of worshiping in the Holy Sepulcher are "contested with so much unchristian fury and animosity, especially between the Greeks and Latins, that in disputing which party should go in to it to celebrate their mass, they have sometimes proceeded to blows and wounds even at the very door of the sepulcher, mingling their



own blood with the sacrifices, in evidence of which fury the father guardian showed us a great scar upon his arm which he told us was the mark of a wound given him by a sturdy Greek priest in one of those unholy wars. Who can expect ever to see these holy places rescued from the hands of infidels? Or if they should be recovered what deplorable contests might be expected to follow about them, seeing, even in their present state of captivity, they are made the occasion of such unchristian raids and animosities."

Ever since the schism in the holy church after its recognition by Constantine, the Greek and Latin factions have been fighting for the possession of the holy places. What is known as the Orthodox Greek Church is by far the most powerful, numerous and wealthy of all the Christian sects represented in Jerusalem, and has the advantage of the vigorous support, physical, political, moral and diplomatic, of the Russian government, whose consul general resides within the enclosure that contains the Greek hospice for pilgrims and the Russian church.

The Roman Catholics, dating from the days of St. Louis, King of France, have had the moral and political support of France, but since the overthrow of the empire and the establishment of a republic this support has grown weaker and less effective. The Jews, strange to say, are under the protection of the Austrian and Spanish consuls—representatives of the two sovereigns who are most loyal and zealous in their support of the pope. The French consul gives his best efforts, no doubt, to secure protection for the Franciscans and other religious orders, but the controlling influence of Palestine is in Constantinople, and the sultan knows the atheistical tendencies of the French



people and the indifference of the French government to the interests of the church.

Jerusalem is the residence of a governor, or *mutesarrif*, of the first class, who is immediately subject to the personal authority of the sovereign. The present incumbent has been there but a short time, and up to January, 1902, was private secretary to the sultan. He is assisted by an executive council of his own appointment, which has jurisdiction over the entire province, and a municipal council, which looks after affairs in the town. In both of these councils all of the prominent religious denominations are supposed to have representatives—the Orthodox Greeks, Roman Catholics, Jews, Protestants and Armenians—and each of these representatives is supposed to have jurisdiction over and immediate control of the members of his own faith, for whom he is responsible to the governor and through him to the sultan. They may be either priests or laymen and are appointed upon the recommendation or application of the patriarch, or bishop, having ecclesiastical authority in Jerusalem. Thus the government is semi-ecclesiastical, and every person who arrives in Jerusalem for either permanent or temporary stay, is required to name the religious denomination to which he belongs. He is furnished with a blank to be filled out, with his name, age, birthplace, nationality and religion, and upon the records of the municipality he appears as a subject of the representative of the religion he professes. If he is in trouble or commits a crime, he appeals to, or is brought before the representative of his religion in the council or the patriarch of his church, who is expected to see that he obeys the laws and behaves himself, and punishes him if he fails to do so.

The Protestant community is under the jurisdiction of the bishop of the Established Church of England and the protection of the English and American consuls; the German Protestants are under the German consul.

The Armenians have a patriarch, a monastery, a seminary, a nunnery and two schools. They occupy an interesting section of Mount Zion, including the house of Caiaphas, the high priest, before whom Jesus was tried, and their community, although not large, is, next to the Greeks, the wealthiest in Palestine. They have their share of the sacred places. They claim the site of the martyrdom of the Apostle St. James, which is occupied by their church, next to that of the Holy Sepulcher the largest in the city, and the richest in ecclesiastical decorations and sacred vestments.

In their little chapel opening off the court of the house of Caiaphas, they show another stone that was rolled away from the door of the sepulcher by the angel on the morning of the resurrection; point out the exact spot upon which Peter stood when he denied his Lord, and the roof upon which the cock roosted when it crowed three times. The house of Caiaphas is supposed to be preserved exactly as it was at the time of Christ, and certainly is one of the oldest edifices in Jerusalem. The court is not so large as I expected to find it, but it is an admirable example of a Saracenic cloister and is painted in Oriental colors. The cell in which Christ was confined is a small dungeon built into the wall, and is now reached through the chapel. Both in the house and in the chapel are some fine specimens of wood carving and gilding, and hanging upon the wall of the latter, near the altar, is one of those trick pictures painted upon a gridiron of tin



which shows the face of the Savior if you look at it from one direction, the face of St. John if you look at it from another and that of the Holy Virgin if you stand directly in front. There are tombs of several Armenian patriarchs in the courtyard.

The Copts, the Maronites, the Abyssinians, the Jacobites and several other Oriental sects have monasteries, churches and schools, and some of them claim possession of sacred soil. They have their share of the pilgrims and take care of them in their own hospices.

The Greek monks are aggressive and vindictive and are much the stronger both in numbers, ability and wealth, and have several advantages, the most important of which is the zealous support of the Russian consul general, who is beyond question the most influential man in Jerusalem to-day. Turkey is afraid of the czar. The sultan knows that Russia would cheerfully accept any excuse or pretext for trouble; he also knows that, as the recognized head of the Greek church, the czar would be very glad to control the Holy Land. This feature of Eastern politics is thoroughly understood among the religious fraternities and the clergy here, as well as among the Turkish officials.

The Greeks are united, which is also a great advantage. They have no factions and are entirely harmonious, while the Roman Catholics are badly broken up by rivalries between the several religious orders. Among some of them the jealousy is almost as bitter as between the Franciscans and the Greeks. The Franciscans have charge of the holy places controlled by the Roman Catholic church everywhere in Palestine, which is a cause of perpetual dissatisfaction and is resented by some of the other orders. In a division



the Armenians, Copts and other churches side with the Greeks, so that the Latins are all alone.

The Greek patriarch is one of the most conspicuous men in Jerusalem. He lives in a handsome house, drives the finest pair of horses and carriages in the city, is famous for his social qualities and makes the most of his position, while the Franciscan superior, who is recognized as the head of the Roman Catholic community, is a man of devout habits and retiring disposition and seldom leaves the seclusion of his monastery.

The Greeks have control of most of the holy places and practice the greatest impositions upon the pilgrims. They have the largest and finest hospices, which can accommodate 9,000 or 10,000 pilgrims at one time. Their churches are the most imposing, their hospitals and schools are more extensive than those of any other denomination. The Russian hospice is like a fortress, surrounded by a mighty wall covering an immense area. It is the only nation that looks after its pilgrims officially, for the consul general of the czar has his residence and office among the hospices and convents. The Russians entertain from 50,000 to 60,000 pilgrims every year.

Most of the Roman Catholic institutions are French and the minister of education and religion in Paris exercises a general supervision for sanitary reasons over the convents, hospices and other places intended for the entertainment of French pilgrims, who are more numerous than those of any other nation except the Russians. It is a rather singular fact that few pilgrims ever come from Austria, Italy or Spain, the three countries supposed to be most loyal to the Roman Catholic church, and none of them has a hos-



RUSSIAN PILGRIMS ON THE WAY TO THE JORDAN.





pital or a hospice here. The Germans have a fine new church. The Roman Catholic institutions are more numerous than the Russian, but are not so extensive and are divided among several brotherhoods and sisterhoods. The Dominican monks have a very large hospice, and can entertain at least 2,000 pilgrims. The Assumptionists can entertain 1,200, the Franciscans have several hospices, hospitals and schools and can take care of perhaps 3,000. The Sisters of the Redemption have a new, huge building that is both hospice and hospital, and there are several other institutions owned and managed by sisters of charity and similar orders. One of the finest of the buildings of the Roman Catholics is St. Peter's School, which was founded by a Jewish banker named Ratisbon, who was converted to Roman Catholicism by a miracle and left all of his money for the benefit of the people of his race, and for their conversion to the Roman Catholic church. His story is a strange one. While he was a young man in Rome he entered a Roman Catholic church from curiosity to see a famous picture of the Madonna, and, while he was gazing at it with admiration, the figure seemed to leave the canvas and approach him. He fell upon his knees. When the apparition reached him the Holy Mother placed her hand upon his head, and, in a gentle, but sad voice said:

"Why do you reject my Son?"

There are several Protestant hospitals and schools in Jerusalem, conducted by both Americans and British, and the German Lutherans are also quite active. Protestant missionaries came into Palestine soon after the beginning of the nineteenth century. Few Moslems or Jews have been converted, but both recognize the usefulness of Christianity through its schools and

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medical missions. The agents of the American Board of Foreign Missions were first upon the ground and have worked the longest and most effectively. They translated the Bible into the popular language, set up the first printing press, opened the first hospital and the first school. Then came the Irish and Scotch Presbyterians, the Established Church of England, and after them the representatives of every sect that calls itself religious.

XXII

The Moslems of Jerusalem





## XXII

### THE MOSLEMS OF JERUSALEM

Jerusalem is a place of overwhelming interest to all Christendom, and is almost as sacred to the followers of Mohammed as to the followers of Christ, but everybody who goes there in a reverential spirit is sure to be disappointed and regretful and will often wish that he had stayed away. So many illusions are dispelled, so many ideals are shattered, so many cherished memories are violated, so much confidence is shaken. Every holy and historical place is disputed—almost every spot in the entire city of any public interest, the line of every wall, the position of every palace, temple and synagogue, the location of every gate, the site of every scene connected with the life of the Savior, the name of every pool; several of the most important places are duplicated, and in one instance triplicated. The mercenary spirit pervades every part of the community, which makes its living off pilgrims and tourists, and will find holy places and arguments and evidence to support them as long as trustful and confiding people are willing to pay for the privilege of seeing them. Those who are competent to speak on such subjects say that the longer you stay and the oftener you come to Jerusalem the more rapidly these objections diminish in importance and the greater will be the interest which the ruins and traditions inspire; but everybody will always be obliged to confess the degraded aspect of the people, the material and moral decline of the city, the filth and wretchedness of the

homes, the cheap and tawdry decorations of the churches, and the inappropriateness of the monuments. Superstition and fanaticism, formalism and avarice are the chief characteristics of the modern city, once the fountain head from which the knowledge of the true God was diffused to the children of men, and after a few days' experience you feel like buttoning up your pockets when you kneel to pray before a sacred shrine.

Jerusalem is not a town for amusement or recreation; for everything is tinged with religious sentiment and relates to Scriptural history. There is nothing to attract a traveler but shrines and memories, and the air is full of controversy, jealousy, and doubt.

There is nothing beautiful in or about the city except the Mosque of Omar, which is one of the sublimest conceptions of Saracenic architecture in existence. Although we sing of the glory, the purity and happiness of Jerusalem, it is one of the most repulsive places in all the world. The old city is a mass of stone masonry, separated by narrow streets and courts and surrounded by a wall thirty-eight feet high and altogether two and a half miles in length. There are few open spaces, the streets are crooked; many of them are blind alleys, and those in the business districts are vaulted over. There are no sewers and none but surface drainage. All the filth and offal of unmentionable sorts is dumped upon the pavement for the dogs to scatter and the rain to wash away. In wet weather the streets are stinking cesspools, and when they dry up the mixture is ground to powder beneath the hoofs of camels and donkeys and the sandals of men, blown into the air and absorbed into the throats and nostrils, the eyes and ears of man and



beast, with myriads of microbes of all varieties. You actually have to hold your nose as you walk down the Via Doloroso, the most holy and interesting street in the world, sanctified by the feet of the Savior who followed it as He bore the cross to Calvary.

The streets inside the walls are as unsafe at night as they are repulsive by day. Strangers, particularly foreigners or Christians, should never wander out by themselves after dark. They are strictly warned against such folly, because it is a Moslem town, in which business is suspended from sunset to sunrise and becomes like a city of the dead after dark. In the older portions there are no street lights, no gas, no electricity, not even petroleum lamps. When darkness falls the bazaars are closed, the shutters are put up, the camels and donkeys are turned into the corrals at the khans, and the people retire behind the high blank walls that inclose their habitations. Those who are compelled to go out on honest business have lanterns carried before them. A man going home without a light is apt to be arrested for a suspicious character. But this is not the greatest danger. In passing through the streets at night a stranger is apt to be touched by a leper, or bitten by a cur, or stabbed by a Mohammedan fanatic.

The latter are the worst of all assassins, because they strike without reason, and their religion not only justifies but rewards them for taking the lives of unbelievers. While the police and military are always on the lookout for these "fakirs," and punish them with instant death if detected, the penalty has no terror for them and it is impossible for strangers to guard against them because they cannot distinguish between people. All Christians look alike to them. Some of

the "fakirs," after having made the pilgrimage to Mecca or to the Mosque of Omar in Jerusalem, go out into the world to fulfill vows they have made to kill or chastise "giaours," as Christians are called, for the sake of the faith, or for some imaginary slight to or profanation of their religion. Strangers who visit mosques must always take a soldier or a kavass from their consulate with them to protect themselves against possible assault from these fanatics.

Many of the common trades are conducted in the streets, and the thoroughfares ordinarily followed by strangers and tourists are lined on both sides with peddlers, who clamor for custom. The Arab has no names for the streets of his cities, although he has a dozen terms to describe a camel trail or path in the mountains. Only two streets are mentioned in the Bible—the "Street of the Bakers" in Jerusalem, and the "Street That Is Called Straight" in Damascus. In Oriental cities streets seldom have fixed names. By common consent they are called after the most conspicuous inhabitant or the trades that are carried on in them. Thus, State street would be called the "Street of the Bargain Counters," or Wabash avenue the "Street With the Bad Pavement." In Jerusalem we find Crockery street, the Street of the Goldsmiths, Christian street and similar names.

The relics of all ages both obstruct and adorn the alleys of Jerusalem. Here and there the broken column of an old temple is used for building material, an ancient Egyptian sarcophagus for a fountain, a Corinthian capital for the lintel of a doorway, and a portion of a pillar that may have sustained the roof of a palace may be built into a garden wall. Occasionally you come across choice bits of architectural design



concealed by the high walls and the crooked lanes. Down on David street, for example, are several exquisite doorways that have an antique look, and undoubtedly were built long before the crusades. The moldings, carvings and ornamental work upon the gateways of the old walls that surround the city are superior to anything you can find in modern buildings. The early Saracenic architecture is as pure as the classic Greek, and is especially adapted for mosques and fountains, which are the two chief classes of buildings with which the Moslem cities are adorned, and the Arabic letters used for quotations from the Koran lend themselves admirably for decorative effects. There are several beautiful fountains in Jerusalem, and some of them are very old, but the lack of proper records and the frequent destruction and devastation of the city prevent their history from being searched. All of them are decorated with inscriptions from the Koran, calling upon every one that thirsteth to drink, and to drink freely, and the invitation is not declined. The Mohammedan, like the Japanese, is always washing whenever he can find water, and does not hesitate to use the public street as a bathroom. Camel drivers coming in from the desert, hot, weary, dusty and thirsty, will stop at the first fountain and strip for a wash, and every true believer who pretends to observe the injunctions of the prophet and the teachings of the Koran bathes himself at least five times a day.

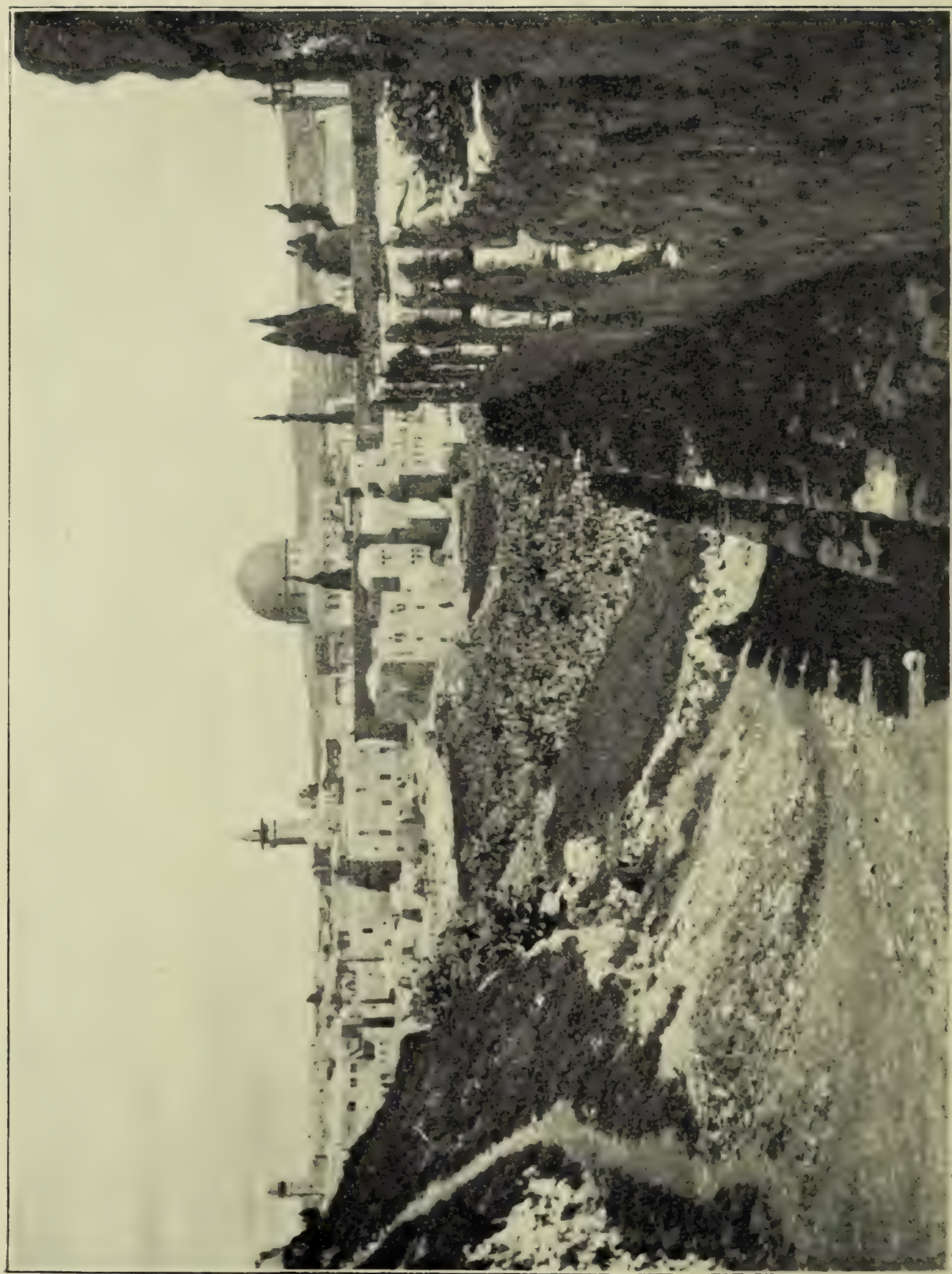
The most imposing architecture in the city, always excepting the Mosque of Omar, which is incomparable, is found in the gates, which are better preserved than those of any other city in the East. Only one of them dates back to the Roman era. Most of them were built in the middle ages, either by the Saracens



or the crusaders, but, with their flanking towers, turrets and battlements, are fine specimens of the architecture and the masonry of their period. The Damascus gate is especially imposing, and through it runs the great highway to Nablus and Damascus, which is at least 4,000 years old. The street from the inside leads into the Via Dolorosa, to the Prætorium of Pilate, and is used as confirmation of the theory that the crucifixion did not take place upon the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, but outside the present walls.

St. Stephen's gate, which is another beautiful example of Saracenic architecture, takes its name from the tradition that the first Christian martyr was stoned to death near by. The Arabs call it the Gate of the Tribes. But St. Stephen's is a place to avoid, because it is haunted by lepers, the most loathsome creatures you can imagine, with their fingers half eaten up by the creeping disease, their bodies covered with ulcers and the stumps of their arms and limbs with festering sores. There is nothing so repulsive in all the world as a leper, and although modern medical science insists that the disease cannot be communicated by ordinary contact, and that the poison must be absorbed through some bruise or broken place in the skin, you nevertheless shrink from them with abhorrence, and they, knowing and appreciating this feeling, are emboldened to pursue those who show fear until they obtain money. There is a comfortable leper hospital down near the Pool of Siloam, but the poor afflicted people will not go into it except in cold weather. When spring comes and the tourist season opens they leave the hospital and lie around in the sunshine in certain spots most frequented by strangers outside the walls. They are not allowed to come inside the





JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.



gates. They sit at the gate of Zion, like Lazarus at the door of Dives, and when they see a party of pilgrims or tourists approaching they crawl into the street, stretch out their hands in a most beseeching manner, and utter piteous appeals that are incoherent because their tongues are usually eaten away. At the gate of the Garden of Gethsemane, at the tomb of the Holy Virgin, at the Pool of Siloam and on the path to Mount Olivet they are found in large numbers.

Another nuisance that might be more easily abated if the authorities of the city would take a little interest in the comfort and welfare of strangers, is the ordinary beggars. Most of them are professionals, who take up that occupation at the beginning of the tourist season, and find it quite profitable; much more so than any honest labor. A man with a maimed limb or a repulsive sore can make a good living six months in the year, and an old woman with a borrowed baby can pick up more baksheesh by hanging around the holy places than she can earn in any other way.

From the sacrifice of Abraham to the conquest of Joshua we hear nothing of Jerusalem in the Bible. At the time of the exodus it was called Jebus and was a fortified place. Its king was slain by the Israelites at the great battle of Gibeon, but the city was not captured until the reign of David, who transferred the government from Hebron to Zion, and ever afterward Jerusalem was the capital of the Jewish nation and the center of its faith and worship. It was besieged many times from David's reign, demolished by the Babylonians, badly damaged by the invasion of Pompey, and finally destroyed by Titus in the year 70 A. D., after a siege of nearly five months. Soon afterward it was resettled by both Jews and Romans, and the for-

tress was rebuilt. In 132, when the Jews rebelled against Emperor Hadrian, Jerusalem was again destroyed. Hadrian rebuilt it and called it *Ælia*, and for several generations it was known by that name. Constantine restored, enriched and adorned it, and his mother, the Empress Helena, set the fashion of pilgrimages to its sacred sites, which have continued from all parts of the world down to the present hour. Since then Jerusalem has suffered terrible calamities, having twice been destroyed by the Romans, once by the Persians, and very nearly so by the crusaders, who captured and held possession of it for about one hundred years. Then, in 1187, it was given up to Saladin and the flag of Mohammedan has since floated over the tower of David.

According to the calculations of Josephus, Jerusalem was 2,127 years old when overthrown by Titus, which makes its present age 3,959 years. More than any other city on earth has it been the focus of human interest; more than any other city has it influenced the religious character of the human race. It is the shrine of more than half the world's population; the Holy City of Christendom, sanctified by the sufferings and the death of Jesus Christ, the founder of the Christian religion and the Redeemer of Men, and yet it remains in the control of Mohammedans.

Both the Philistines and the Hebrews were immigrants and invaders; both came from Egypt into the land over which they fought for centuries; both absorbed the Canaanites, who originally owned and occupied it. Israel survived, under the favor of God, and the Philistines, who worshiped Dagon, disappeared, although they fastened their name upon the country—Palestine, a corruption of Philistine. Saul,



Samson, David, Hezekiah and other Hebrew leaders fought to control the entire territory, but the Philistines did not yield until the invasion of Alexander the Great, and the introduction of Greek culture and civilization. The Babylonian captivity disintegrated the Jewish nation. It has never since been reunited or recovered its power or prestige; it has never since occupied the land that the Lord God gave it, but is scattered to the ends of the earth. The covenant with Israel was forever and ever, but remains unfulfilled, and in the meantime an alien race has temporal and spiritual jurisdiction in the Holy City and over the Promised Land.

In the light of Christ's teachings, it is difficult to understand the mysterious triumph of Mohammedanism over Christianity at His birthplace, at His home, and at His tomb, and in the very theater of His activity; it is difficult to interpret the Divine Judgment which has placed the keys of the Holy Sepulcher and the cradle of Christ in the hands of the Turks. Perhaps the early church of Christ was trampled down by Islam because it was corrupt and deserved to fall, and later, in attempting to regain its birthplace during the middle ages, Christianity failed, perhaps because it was cruel, wicked, selfish and avaricious. Upon the very soil where Jesus taught the ignorant, and healed the sick, and cured the blind, preached the gospel of brotherly love and charity and compassion; in the very towns where He went about doing good, wiping the tears from the eyes of sorrowful women and blessing little children that were brought to His knee, the treacherous and brutal crusaders, who carried His cross and proclaimed His name, never allowed the sword to leave their hands, but slaughtered their prisoners and



swept down the unoffending population with murder, fire, rapine and robbery.

Seen beneath the shadow of their great failure, the crusaders are admirable only as the heroes of chivalry and romance, and for the infinite courage and endurance they displayed. By their followers Palestine was settled, organized and built over as completely as medieval England. Fortresses arose upon the coast, huge castles upon the high places of the interior and the ruins of cities, churches and cloisters scattered all over the land testify to their labor and enterprise and sacrifices, which, however, were neutralized by jealousies, intrigue and quarrels which left the land without protection and opened it to the victorious Saracen.

Upon the crumbling walls of the crusader castles have arisen the wretched villages of the Mohammedan population, and among them occasionally during the past century have appeared flourishing schools of almost every sect in Christendom; hospitals, asylums, sanitariums, orphanages and other institutions of benevolence, which bear witness that this generation of Christians are mindful of His teachings and have come again into His native country, not with the sword and torch, as before, but with food for the hungry, scientific skill for healing diseases and books for the education and the elevation of the races which now occupy the land; and the long processions of pilgrims perpetually winding their way to Jerusalem from all the corners of the earth are evidence that love and devotion for the Holy City are still aflame in the minds of the followers of Jesus as well as among those who claim the right and title to graves upon the slopes of Olivet and Zion and in the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

The Mosque of Omar, or "The Dome of the Rock,"

as the Arabs call it, according to the best authorities, occupies the site of Solomon's Temple, the ancient Mount Moriah. It looks over a steep embankment into the deep Valley of Jehoshaphat, with the Garden of Gethsemane and Mount Olivet on the other side. It is an immense paved area with what the Syrians call a garden, containing walks of gravel, a few plants and flowers, a little wild grass, clumps of undergrowth and groups of cypresses, and, hugging the walls, a luxuriant crop of prickly pears. In the center of this great square, upon a low marble pedestal, is one of the most exquisite specimens of Saracenic architecture human genius could conceive. I had always considered St. Mark's Cathedral and the Doges' Palace at Venice the most beautiful buildings in the world, but that was before I had seen the Mosque of Omar. Screens and colonnades of remarkable beauty, porches supported by slender, graceful pillars, kiosks, altars, fountains and reservoirs for the ablutions before prayer surround this matchless structure, and a few hundred feet away, at the end of a gentle slope, is another, equally sacred to Moslems, called the Mosque el Aksa, which stands upon the foundations of Solomon's palace and is supposed to have been formerly a Christian church, erected by Justinian.

The walls of these mosques represent Saracenic art of the best period and remind you of the Alhambra at Grenada, the Alcazar at Seville and other Moorish buildings in Spain. Their graceful lines and delicate traceries are in striking contrast with the rugged and shapeless structures of the Jews. The Jews have never excelled in art. During the entire history of the nation they did not produce a picture or a statue or a building that would compare with the ordinary works



of the Greeks. The only architectural monuments erected in Jerusalem during their time—the temple and palace of Solomon, were the work of Phoenician architects, loaned by Hiram of Tyre.

The domes, the colonnades, the fountains and the pulpits that surround the Mosques of Omar and El Aksa make the most beautiful group of architecture in the East. The marble octagon that surrounds and the shapely dome that shelters the sacred rock of Islam, are not surpassed for grace, beauty or strength in all the universe, and historical associations give them incomparable interest. Many people believe that the father of the faithful came to the summit of Mount Moriah to offer up his first-born and well-beloved son Isaac; here the ark of the covenant rested; here was the threshing floor where stood the angel that was about to destroy Jerusalem, and which King David was commanded to purchase of Araunah, the Jebusite, that he might rear an altar to the Lord; here Solomon appeared in all his glory, with the congregation of Israel before him, and erected the most magnificent building of his age without the sound of hammer or saw, to which all the world contributed its treasures; here “the cloud filled the house of the Lord” and Solomon said, “I have surely built Thee a house to dwell in, a settled place for Thee to abide in forever;” here Christ worshiped and taught; here He drove the traders out of His Father’s house, and the veil, the portico, of this temple was rent in twain when the Man on the Cross was spending His last breath in a prayer for His enemies. Millions have prayed, tens of thousands have perished upon this hilltop, and it has been the scene of some of the most awful events in history, both human and divine.



The Holy House was burned and overthrown by the Babylonians, and the ruins were not removed for more than a century, but when the temple was rebuilt and rededicated this area must have been crowded with the members of the Hebrew nation who had survived the captivity. After the lapse of four more troubled centuries the temple was again destroyed. Herod the Great rebuilt it in forty and six years, but his monument lasted only a century, for then came Titus with his Roman legions, and Jerusalem and the Jewish nation suffered horrors that were unparalleled in human history up to that date. The temple was sacked and burned, so that not one stone was left upon another, in fulfillment of the curse of Christ. Here God promised that the covenant with Jacob should be fulfilled if his children remained faithful, but if not "then will I cut off Israel out of the land that I have given it."

The evidences of the fulfillment of prophecy appear everywhere in Palestine with striking force and are incontestable. No Christian can enter this mosque except with a military guard to protect his life, and upon its sacred soil a Jew may not so much as set his foot.

According to the opinions of the Biblical archeologists the Temples of Solomon and of Herod occupied the exact site upon which the Kubbet es Sukrah—the Mosque of Omar—now stands, and with their inclosing colonnades, courts and cloisters occupied a space 900 feet from east to west and 600 feet from north to south. It is also believed that the eastern walls of the inclosure were laid in Solomon's time, because the explorers have found the ciphers and signs of the Phoenician builders chiseled in the foundation

stones, and it is very certain that no architects of that race have been here since the death of Hiram, King of Tyre.

This holy and historical inclosure is approached through another series of filthy streets like those which lead to the Church of the Sepulcher, and to make the journey one needs a pair of rubber boots, plenty of disinfectants and a microbe screen over his mouth and nostrils. He also requires a military guard. If the consul of his nation cannot spare the kavass, or official guard recognized by the government, it is necessary to apply for a soldier from the garrison as protection against Moslem fanatics and fakirs, who resent the intrusion of curious Christians into their shrine. We had a sergeant of artillery, an intelligent, deferential man, who took a great interest in promoting our knowledge and pleasure.

The grounds around the temple and the various little buildings here and there, fountains, kiosks, pulpits and praying places, all deserve special attention, for each has its individuality and traditions. One of the praying places is said to have been built especially for Fatima, the daughter of Mohammed; another is believed to be the judgment seat of King David, and situated a little south of the mosque is one of the most exquisite specimens of Oriental architecture—a series of pointed arches and a marble pulpit for outdoor preaching.

The mosque is an octagon, each side measuring sixty-seven feet, and its dome is 170 feet in height. We were met at the entrance by several Mohammedan moulahs, who took charge of our sticks and umbrellas, and gave us felt slippers to draw over our boots. One of them was inclined to be ugly. Angry words passed



between him and our dragoman, and at one time it looked as if he would keep us out of the holy place, but a tall priest, with a long beard and a white turban, who seemed to be the head of affairs, intervened, brushed away the remonstrant, and led us through the curtains himself. We found ourselves under a dome of indescribable beauty, its surface enameled with the most delicate tracery of brown and gold, and its windows filled with ancient stained glass of marvelous colors. The wainscoting is of Damascus tiles, decorated with delicate arabesques, and the floor is covered with rich Persian rugs. The first thought that came into my mind was, why cannot the Christian world raise so beautiful a tabernacle over the tomb of Christ?

In the center of the mosque, directly below the dome, surrounded by twelve columns and a gilded iron railing, and overhung with a canopy of crimson silk, is the great limestone rock called "Es Sukhrah," about sixty by forty feet in size, and twelve feet from the surrounding floor at its highest point. For two thousand years it was the altar of God, from which His chosen people offered Him praise and incense and made sacrifices in His honor. It is a rugged mass of stone, and except for steps chiseled in one side of it by the crusaders, it remains as nature made it in the beginning, millions of years ago, and will probably lie there until it crumbles and its atoms disappear in the final cataclysm. In the center is a sort of natural basin, the top surface being slightly concave, and a hole has been drilled through into a subterranean cavern by which the blood of the sacrifices was carried away. This cavern is called "The Well of the Souls," and many interesting superstitions are attached to it.



According to the Mohammedan tradition, it was the praying place of Abraham, David, Solomon and Jesus, and it is one of the most sacred spots on earth.

At one corner of the stone is shown a depression called the footprint of Mohammed, showing where the prophet's foot last touched the earth as he departed on his heavenward journey, and a little farther away another depression shows where the archangel Gabriel laid his hand upon the rock and held it down by main force when it was rising with Mohammed.

"When Mohammed he go heaven, holy rock he say he go too," was the explanation given us by Isa, our dragoman, whose English vocabulary and information concerning Scriptural history are not natural, but acquired. "And Angel Gabriel he put his paw on it here and he say, No rock, you can't go with Mohammed. You must stay. I keep you. And so the rock he stay down."

In an exquisite casket of gold are two hairs from the beard of the prophet, and once every year, upon a certain anniversary, they are carried seven times around the mosque under a canopy by the highest ecclesiastics of the Mohammedan church, followed by a reverential procession, consisting of the governor, the officials, the military and the priests.

This rock is quite as sacred as the black stone of Mecca, not only because of its historical associations, but because the Musselmans believe that the Almighty will take His seat upon it at the last judgment day.

The courts, the walls, the pillars of the successive temples that have stood here have vanished, yet this rock remains, truly the Rock of Ages—immortal, immovable, and as solid as the earth itself.

As we were passing out a priest called our attention

to a stone slab into which the prophet Mohammed (who, by the way, was never in Jerusalem) drove nineteen golden nails. At the end of every century, and sometimes when events of momentous importance to the church happen, the devil removes one of them. He has managed to draw out all but three, and a fourth remains crooked and broken in the stone. The Angel Gabriel caught him in time and caused him to break the last one that he tried to draw. When he draws the rest the world will come to an end.

The Mosque el Aksa, as I have already said, is supposed to stand upon the foundations of the palace of Solomon, and the grand arcade or cloister erected by Herod also occupied the same area and extended a distance of 900 feet. Josephus says, "It deserves to be mentioned better than any other under the sun." It is supposed to have been what the New Testament frequently refers to as Solomon's porch remodeled. Here, St. John tells us, "Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch," when the Jews came to Him and demanded, "If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." From here also Jesus is supposed to have driven the traders from the temple. Isa pointed out the exact spot and explained: "Our Lord He come here and He see the peddlers cheating and swindling people and He say, Go off; go away with you; take away those things. You must not cheat and lie. Do not my Father's house make a bazaar. Our God very angry that day."

I have no space to describe the many interesting things about "the noble sanctuary," as this group of memorable buildings is called. They deserve an entire volume to themselves, and to see them properly and describe them accurately one must spend days there

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instead of the hours that were allowed to me. Beneath the Mosque el Aksa is a crypt, a forest of massive pillars, called Solomon's stables, which archeologists admit may possibly have been used for the horses of the Jewish king, although they were rebuilt by the Saracens after the crusades.



XXIII

**The City of the Nativity**









BABES OF BETHLEHEM.

## XXIII

### THE CITY OF THE NATIVITY

It delights the soul to find at least one clean and well kept town in Palestine, and the more so because it is Bethlehem, a place which appeals more strongly and deeply to the religious and poetic sentiment than any other on earth, because it has been the scene of the most beautiful idyls in human history; for was it not here that Ruth gleaned the fields of Boaz, and not only won a good husband but became the mother of a long line of kings? and was it not here that Jacob laid the body of his beloved Rachel? Looking from the walls of the convent you can see the home of Jesse, the slopes upon which David herded his sheep, the farm of Boaz, the caves in which David hid from Saul, the fields in which the shepherds were abiding, keeping watch over their flocks by night when they saw the star of Bethlehem, and the paths by which they approached the stable in which the young child lay. All this scarcely seems real, but there it is, spread out before you like an ordinary landscape, like the views in any ordinary country, and there are no frauds in the natural features of Bethlehem. The landscape is exactly the same this morning as it was on that memorable day when Samuel came up from Gilgal to choose a king from among the chief men of Judea. According to the legends, the star fell into a well, and you can see it there now. The place is so real, so actual, so tangible that one is tempted to believe the



story, and I saw it myself, twinkling in the dark water.

It is a delightful four-mile drive from Jerusalem to Bethlehem over a good road, between picturesque and sunny landscapes, and every foot of the way is filled with historical associations. We pass a great hospital which Sir Moses Montefiore built for the benefit of the poor of his race, and the Temple Colony, where German Lutherans from Wurtemberg and Buffalo have set up a model town as an example to the inhabitants of the Holy Land; the Hill of Evil Council; one of several trees on which Judas is said to have hanged himself; the country house of Caiaphas; the house of Simeon, who wanted to depart in peace because his eyes had seen "thy salvation"; the well at which Joseph stopped to water his donkey when he was on his way to Bethlehem; the Convent of the Cross, which was founded by St. Helena. "There is the earth that nourished the roots that bore the tree that yielded the timber that made the cross upon which the Son of God was crucified." Under the altar of the chapel the monks will show you a hole in the ground where the stump of the tree once stood, and pilgrims fall down and worship it.

Strange bands, these pilgrims, particularly the Russians, but there are many others, and they come from all the corners of the earth in hunger and thirst, through frost and heat, begging food on the way and sleeping under the stars at night. Their faith is mighty, their zeal a burning flame and their satisfaction intense. Only a soul entirely free from the trammels of the world can kneel and kiss a marble slab which covers a hole from which a tree is said to have been taken two thousand years ago.

A little farther on is a castle of the Knights of







RACHEL'S TOMB.

Malta, which has been standing there ever since the crusades. It overlooks "the field of peas," so called from a legend that Christ once asked a man in that field what he was sowing. The man replied "Stones." Whereupon the seed peas in his pouch turned to stone as punishment for his impertinence to the Savior, and ever since that field has produced peas of stone, which are still found on the spot and sold to pilgrims.

But soon we come to a little mosque built of coarse white limestone, with a low dome of masonry, that stands by the roadside in most unattractive surroundings. It is, however, one of the most sacred places on earth in the minds of several hundred millions of people.

About four thousand years ago a young sheikh named Jacob came along this way. He had served a deceitful father-in-law seven years for one of his daughters and had been betrayed into marriage with another, and then had served seven years longer for the right one. His wives and little ones, his man servants and maid servants, his oxen and his asses, his herds and flocks, followed him as he moved slowly toward Hebron, where his father Isaac dwelt. When they reached Bethlehem, Rachel, the beloved wife, for whom he had served fourteen years, died in the pangs of motherhood and was buried upon a green slope by the roadside. There is something remarkable, something inexplicable that a man of Jacob's wealth, under the circumstances, should have buried his beloved in such an exposed and public place, and entirely among strangers, when Machpeleh, the sepulcher of his ancestors, was at Hebron, only a few miles away.

Long after this, when he was about to die in Egypt, Jacob told his son Joseph the touching story of his



mother's death and burial, and that makes it the more extraordinary that Joseph, the lord of Egypt, a prince of vast wealth and power, did not transfer the remains of his mother from this tomb on the highway to the family sepulcher where Sarah, the wife of Abraham; Rebecca, the wife of Isaac; and Leah, the unloved wife of Jacob, lay. And we have no explanation of these singular circumstances. The tomb of Rachel, however, in this public place, was known and venerated when Moses led the hosts of Israel out of the wilderness; nor has it been lost or overlooked or its identity questioned to the present hour.

The dust of Rachel has long since disappeared, when and how no one can say, but her tomb is more holy in the eyes of Israel than any other place in Palestine, and as sacred to the Mohammedans as to the Hebrews. The present mosque was restored by Sir Moses Montefiore, although it belongs to the Moslems.

It was beside the tomb of Rachel that Samuel, the prophet, met Saul, the son of Kish, when the latter was searching the gullies around Bethlehem for his father's live stock that had gone astray, and anointed him with the holy oil to be King of Israel.

The story of David, the shepherd boy of Bethlehem, who, after a succession of most remarkable adventures and achievements, became King of Israel, is unsurpassed in all literature for sentiment, romance and tragedy, and many of the scenes are laid around this quiet little city. You remember that David was a skillful harpist; so they brought him one night to the king's bedchamber that he might drive away the evil spirits, and the king's son Jonathan and his daughter Michal loved the young musician. But Saul, insane with jealousy, remorse and unsatisfied ambition,

threw his spear at the minstrel, who had to flee from the palace. He was a fugitive in the hills for many days, being hunted like an outlaw, and having many narrow escapes. And you remember how the rash boy cut off Saul's coat-tails in the cave, and again in the camp, while he was sleeping, carried away his canteen and his spear.

Every hill, every valley, every stone around Bethlehem is associated with the adventures and triumphs of that shepherd lad, and it became known at early times, and has ever since been called the City of David. He inherited the fields of Boaz, and the house in which Ruth lived was his home for many years, until, in his old age, he gave it as an affectionate gift to the son of an old friend whom he highly esteemed.

Five hundred years later Bethlehem was the scene of another idyl, the most beautiful ever enacted, when the stars and the angels sang a serenade together over a stable.

Then followed the great tragedy, when the threshold of every cottage in Bethlehem was stained with the blood of a baby, murdered by Herod, in order that the child that had been born in a manger might not live to become a king.

The Bethlehem of to-day has a population of about 8,000 people, almost entirely dependent upon tourists and pilgrims and the manufacture of religious emblems. At least 4,000 men, women and children are engaged in manufacturing rosaries, crucifixes and other articles of olive and sandal wood and mother-of-pearl. The mother-of-pearl work is famous. - The material is obtained from shells brought from the Red Sea, and some of the carvings are exquisite. You can see hundreds of people making all kinds of ornaments and



trinkets in windowless rooms as you pass through the narrow streets.

There are no Jews in Bethlehem, and only seven Mohammedans; at least so they say. The rest of the population are Christians, and Bethlehem has the reputation of being the most orderly, industrious and contented community in Palestine. The city is the cleanest we have seen, although there might be some improvement on several of the back streets, the slums, I suppose. The main part of the town is neatly kept; the pavements are swept and sprinkled daily, the houses are neatly whitewashed, the courtyards are as clean as a New England dairy and the atmosphere is free from those hideous stenchs that assail you in other towns.

The only drawback to the pleasure of a visit to Bethlehem are the appalling ugliness of the church that stands over the scene of the Nativity and the persistence of the peddlers who follow pilgrims and tourists from place to place as they go about sightseeing. They do not leave you alone a moment. You cannot look at anything without having half a dozen impertinent venders of rosaries, beads and other articles come before you. You cannot think for a moment without being interrupted by their rasping voices importuning you to buy. It is strange that justifiable homicides do not occur there every day.

Millions of rosaries are shipped from Bethlehem annually to all parts of the world, as Mohammedans and Greeks, as well as Roman Catholics, use them to count their prayers. They are even more necessary to the former than to the members of any other creed, because they are required to repeat the same prayer ninety-nine times, and very few people have the men-



tal vigor to keep tally on such a task. Millions of crucifixes of ivory, mother-of-pearl, olive, sandalwood and cedar, lava, marble, alabaster and other materials are made and sold, and car loads of articles of olive-wood of all descriptions are carried away each week on the backs of camels to the railway freight station at Jerusalem or across the mountain trails to Jaffa, for it is still possible for the caravans to compete with the railroads in rates. Much of this material goes to America. I met a gentleman in Bethlehem who had a booth at the world's fair at Chicago for the sale of religious merchandise. He told me that he had built up a trade of large proportions and was shipping each year thousands of dollars' worth to Chicago and New York, where he had his own agents established, as well as a profitable business with the department stores.

While we were scouting around town with our kodaks we caught sight of a Bethlehem bride. Many of the places in Palestine, like those of France and the Tyrol, have their own peculiar costumes, and that worn by the women of Bethlehem is the most fetching we have seen. It glitters with embroidery and is musical with jingling coins. This bride justified the reputation which the women of Bethlehem have for beauty, for she was a lovely creature and looked all the prettier when she blushed. The groom had recently returned from Central America. He had lived in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, for several years, and, having prospered in business, had come home to marry his true love. He invited us into his house, offered us cakes and wine, in obedience to the laws of Oriental hospitality, and with a proud air of possession, gave us permission to photograph, as often as we liked, the beautiful girl he had married.

It would be a great thing if the churches of Christendom would celebrate the twentieth century by holding a conference for the purpose of providing ways and means for the erection of a suitable temple upon the site of the Nativity. The present structure is inadequate and unworthy, being incomplete, insecure, neglected and partially in ruins, while the interior is disgracefully tawdry and cheap. It is one of the oldest examples of Christian architecture in the world, but has been partially destroyed on several occasions, and the restorations that have been made from time to time were intended to be only temporary. Almost every old church throughout Palestine is attributed to the Empress Helena, most of them falsely; some have been erected within the last two or three centuries and more date from the time of the crusades. The energy, the enterprise and the piety of that good woman were so notable and she did so much to honor and uplift Christianity that she is credited with many works that she never thought of; but there is no doubt that the basilica at Bethlehem, at least a part of it, was erected by her direction and under her supervision. This fact is not disputed, and I believe it is the only church in Palestine of which that may be said. The remaining buildings attributed to her are more or less in doubt.

The Church of the Nativity, as it is called, is an enormous, irregular and ugly pile of buildings extending along a ridge of the hill on which Bethlehem is built, from east to west, and includes three convents owned by the Roman Catholic, Orthodox Greek and Armenian churches, all of them connected with it. There is absolutely nothing to excite interest in the entire structure except its size and a few Corinthian



pillars, half obliterated mosaics, and roof beams of cedar from Lebanon. In this church Baldwin I. was crowned King of Jerusalem, and there hundreds of kings, princes and potentates and other great men from the East and the West have knelt in prayer to the Christ Child.

The Church of the Holy Sepulcher at Jerusalem, the Church of the Annunciation at Nazareth, the Tomb of the Virgin, the Garden of Gethsemane, and all the other greater sanctuaries have been the subject of dispute for centuries. Nothing definite can be said for or against their authenticity, and therefore they probably always will be involved in doubt and controversy, which is used as a reason, or rather as an excuse, for not erecting appropriate monuments over them, but no such objection can be offered to the Church of the Nativity. The traditions which surround it can be traced back to the very night of the Savior's birth, and secular history confirms them. We know that Jesus was born in a stable because there was no room for his parents at the inn; we know that that stable was connected with a cave, and that it was situated in the village; we know that the location of the village has not been changed, and, there being but one cave, the chain of evidence is clear.

The Christian sects should also agree that the temple sheltering the birthplace of Christ should not be turned into a bazaar as it is to-day by the Greek priests. The Roman Catholic priests are not guilty of this sacrilege, but the Greeks not only peddle all sorts of religious souvenirs before the very altar, and importune pilgrims to buy them, but practice impositions and frauds upon the devout and trustful peasants which would send them all to the penitentiary if they



could be tried in any common law court. Some of these impositions are extraordinary and even absurd. For example:

According to tradition, the Holy Mother went into a cave near the village of Bethlehem at some time or another to nurse the baby Jesus. A few drops of milk from her overflowing breasts fell upon the floor and were absorbed by the dry, porous, chalky soil. The priests say that it permeated the entire hill just as the attar of roses will permeate semi-solid substances with the force of its virility. For centuries there has been a superstition among the of women Bethlehem that chalk from the floor of this cave dissolved in milk or water, if taken by a mother, will not only promote fertility, but abolish the profession of wet nurses. Women who are not mothers and young maidens use it to develop their busts, and for that it is claimed to be very efficacious. Hence tablets or cakes like little pats of butter made of this chalk are much sought after by women pilgrims, and the demand is supplied by the Greek priests.

They find no embarrassment or difficulty in the fact that the cave belongs to the Franciscan brothers and is closely guarded. It is surrounded by a high wall and is entered through a chapel and monastery. No Greek, Moslem or Jew can come near it, yet every day during the pilgrim season the Greek monks sell from two to five bushels of chalky tablets alleged to have been made from the clay of the cave that was saturated with milk from the breast of the mother of Christ.

Everybody in Bethlehem knows that the material comes from another part of the hill, where anyone who takes the trouble can see a large excavation. Several car loads of the soil are carted to the Greek monastery

every season, and if the priests are questioned by persons who know the facts they cross themselves and explain that it is the same chalk that is found in the cave, from the same hill, and is equally efficacious. But they make the pilgrims believe that the chalk comes from the cave itself. The Franciscan fathers, who have charge of the cave, become very indignant when they talk of this fraud, and it may be said to their credit that they do not attempt to impose upon the pilgrims in that way. They permit women who are about to become mothers or desire children or are unable to furnish natural nourishment to their little ones to come to the cave to pray.

But this is only one of the many frauds practised by the Greek priests. They sell cargoes of crosses, rosaries and other articles made from wood from the Mount of Olives and flowers and sprigs of olive trees from the Garden of Gethsemane just as they do in Jerusalem, and when inquisitive people question them about it they boldly assert that the articles are genuine.

The Church of the Nativity is also profaned daily by Mohammedan soldiers whose presence, we are told, is absolutely necessary to prevent the Orthodox Greeks and Roman Catholic priests from tearing each other to pieces. Their animosity is just as fierce as in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher at Jerusalem, and although they are not crowded into such close quarters and are not so numerous here, and their chapels are separated by double walls and corridors, the authorities claim to believe that military interference is necessary. Each denomination has its hours of service and is required to observe them. Nor are the priests of one sect allowed to enter the precincts of another. It is a sad commentary upon the Christian church that



the birthplace of its founder must be policed in this way, but I believe all whom it may concern are satisfied that the precaution is necessary to prevent violence, or at least scandal.

The actual manger in which the infant Jesus was laid is now preserved at the magnificent cathedral of St. Maria Maggiore at Rome, and is exposed Christmas when the annual adoration is offered. Its place has been filled with beautifully carved marble slabs, and the exact spot where the infant Savior is said to have been laid is marked by a silver star presented by the Roman Catholics of Vienna in 1852 to replace one which the Greek priests are said to have stolen. That theft caused the controversy that developed into the Crimean War. The manger is in a subterranean vault or cave of irregular shape, dimly lighted with silver lamps, and is reached by two passages chiseled out of the limestone rock. There are two altars in this rough chamber, one belonging to the Greeks and the other to the Roman Catholics, at which pilgrims are allowed to worship.

Connected with this little chapel by a crooked and narrow subterranean passage is a cell in which the ablest and most illustrious of all the early pilgrims to Jerusalem lived and died, and here his holy bones are laid. For thirty years, in this little underground cell, by the light of a candle, St. Jerome studied and worked. Here he made his translation of the Scriptures; here he wrote his commentaries and treatises, and the epistles which exasperated as well as enlightened the Christian world. Here he fasted and prayed and dreamed, and here his great spirit left his fragile frame and took its flight.

It appears from the early records that at one time a



stately portico ornamented the front of the Church of the Nativity, but it was torn away by the Persians or some other barbarian invaders, and has never been replaced. That is why the front of the church looks like the blank partition wall of an ordinary brick building. It is unplastered and unpainted and altogether disgraceful in appearance. It is said that in 1482 King Edward IV. of England and Philip of Burgundy furnished funds to erect the buttresses which now prevent it from falling, and it is remarkable that it has stood for more than five hundred years.

Very much the same state of affairs seems to have existed then as now, and the present condition of the church is accounted for by the inability of the representatives of the different denominations to agree upon the manner in which the repairs should be made. A traveling priest, Father Felix Fabri, who came here in the fifteenth century, tells us that "the Greeks held the choir, the Latins the cave of the Lord's nativity and the Armenians the place of the Three Kings' Offerings. This church at Bethlehem," he said, "is profaned and desecrated; it stands like a barn without hay, an apothecary shop without pots or a library without books. The precious pictures are dropping from the walls because one priest will not let another priest restore them, and we can be thankful that the body of the church is left standing."

As an illustration of the bitter jealousy prevailing among the priests a story is told of a Catholic who had driven a nail into the wall upon which to hang a picture or a lamp or something that had been presented. The Greek priests objected, and appealed to the Turkish authorities. The latter intervened and placed a sentinel at the spot to see that the Catholic priest did

not attempt to carry out his designs, and that the Greek priests did not use violence to prevent him. Nor was the Catholic priest allowed to pull the useless nail from the wall. When the Turkish authorities were questioned about this incident they remarked contemptuously that "the Christian dogs are always snarling at each other."

During the few days before Christmas each year the several orders of monks which have chapels in the Church of the Nativity clean up and decorate the surroundings over which they are allowed jurisdiction. Each sect sweeps, cleans, scrubs and decorates its allotted portion of the great church, but so jealous are they of their rights that one side of a row of pillars that divide Greek territory from the Roman Catholic chapel is cleaned by the monks of one denomination and the other side by monks of the other.

Christmas, 1902, was a season of great anxiety because of the bitterness growing out of incidents in Jerusalem, and several days before that anniversary the governor and the police authorities of Palestine took up their headquarters at Bethlehem, and the wires between that place and Constantinople were hot with telegrams reporting the situation and giving instructions for its treatment. Fortunately, through the diplomatic management of the Mohammedan officials, a collision was prevented, but the tense feeling is illustrated by the experiences of an American gentleman who desired to make a photograph of some ancient mosaics high on the walls of the church. He asked permission to erect a scaffolding upon which he could place his camera and to scrub the mosaics in order that the designs might appear more clearly. The mosaics were on Roman Catholic territory, but in



order to get the proper focus the scaffolding would have to be placed upon Greek territory, hence permission was refused, and when the American appealed to the governor he was informed that nothing could be done without special permission from Constantinople. In describing the situation the governor pointed out a window which had been broken, but the jealousy between the Christian sects was so great that neither would allow a member of the other to mend it, so he employed a Jew glazier to put in a new pane of glass.

But even more extraordinary things have occurred in that sacred church. Tourists inquire the history and significance of a rough iron chain which hangs over the entrance to the grotto in which the Prince of Peace was born, and hear a remarkable story. It is explained that many years ago, through the influence of an Armenian who at that time was grand vizier of Turkey, the Armenian monks obtained permission from the sultan to hang a chain to which lamps could be attached, similar to chains already hung for the same purpose by the Greeks and Roman Catholics. When the governor received the order he notified the Greek bishop, who, after reading the firmin, expressed his desire to coöperate in anything that the sultan had ordered. Permission was then granted to the Armenians, who appeared with their chain on the following day, and when the governor entered the church he was surprised and delighted to find several Greek monks assisting in the work.

The chain was put up without the slightest difficulty, but when an Armenian started with a lamp to hang upon the chain a Greek monk followed and knocked him off the ladder. He fell to the floor senseless and bleeding. The Mohammedan guard



immediately arrested the Greek monk. The bishop was sent for and, to the astonishment of the governor, justified the assault and admitted that it had been committed by his orders. He explained that the Armenian had permission simply to hang a chain for lamps, but the firman did not include permission to hang lamps upon it. Upon examining the document this was found to be the fact. It read "a chain for lamps" and the Greek bishop contended that the Armenians had no right to do anything further. The governor insisted upon a more liberal construction of the order, but the Greeks would not concede a point, and the question was referred to Constantinople for decision.

The authorities at the Sublime Porte are in the habit of avoiding the decision of perplexing questions, hence when the report from the governor reached Constantinople it was poked into a pigeon hole, where it has been lying ever since, and the Armenians have never been able to obtain permission to hang lamps upon their chain.

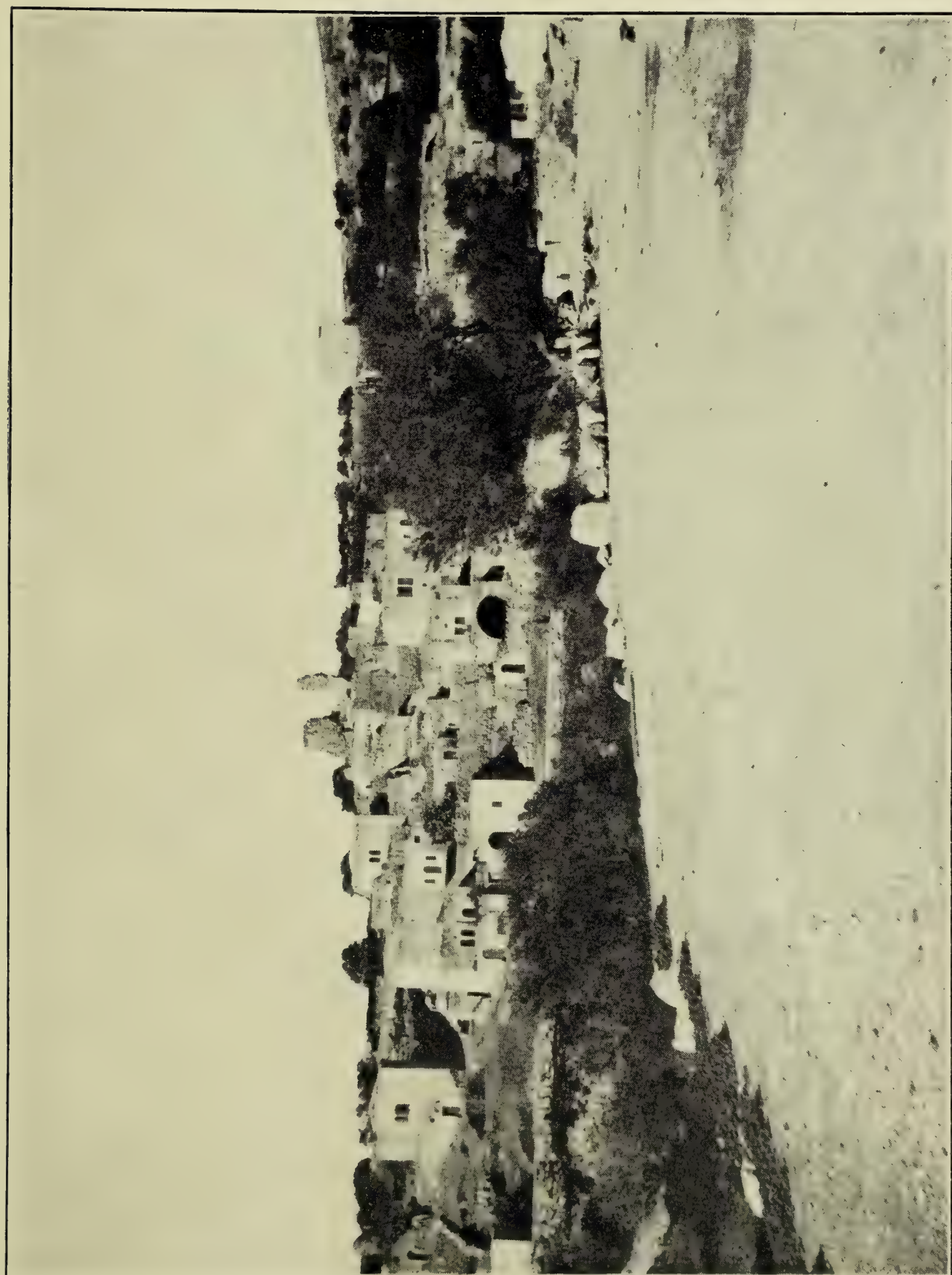
It seems that Jesus never visited His own birthplace, although He must have often passed in sight of it upon His journeys to and from Jerusalem; nor is there any evidence that the Holy Mother ever came here. Neither had she any other associations or connections with the place, except her accidental presence on the night of the Savior's birth.

At the south gate of the city, still in use, is the well that King David loved. When the Philistines held the city, as the quaint story goes, he cried peevishly: "Oh, that one would give me a drink of the water of Bethlehem which is by the gate." Then "three mighty men broke through the hosts of the enemy and drew water

from the well and brought it to the king," but David, ashamed of his childish fancy, "poured it out unto the Lord," saying: "Shall I drink the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?"







BETHANY.



XXIV

Bethany, Hebron, Shiloh and Jericho





## XXIV

### BETHANY, HEBRON, SHILOH AND JERICHO

Bethany is only two miles from St. Stephen's Gate and an easy walk. Every foot of the distance is identified with events in the life of the Savior, and we know that He made the brief journey leisurely, wandering through the olive groves, teaching, preaching and speaking parables.

Bethany is a wretched place. The name means "house of the poor," and is well applied. Sixty generations have appeared and vanished since the little cluster of unplastered stone habitations was so christened, but I presume the dwellings and the people were similar in the time of Christ to those that are called Bethany now. You can see through the cracks between the stones of the walls of the houses, and the inhabitants are Arab peasants, who, the son of their sheikh declared, are too lazy either to work or to steal. They call the town El Aziriyeh now, which is the Arabic for Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead. According to traditions, he was the local sheikh, and owned the village and the land around it. This is confirmed by the Scripture story. Jesus made His home at the house of Lazarus, probably because it was the best in the village. Lazarus had a family sepulcher hewn out of the rock, which is evidence of his wealth, and the large number of people who attended his funeral is evidence of his influence and popularity. The only cave in the village is pointed out as his tomb, and is probably the place. It

appears to be partly natural and partly artificial, the marks of the chisel being shown in the limestone walls. It is reached by a flight of about twenty worn and broken steps, which have been carved in the rock, and lead first to an antechamber, where Jesus no doubt stood when He said, "Lazarus, come forth," and the body of the dead friend in the tomb adjoining at once showed signs of life.

A few feet from the tomb tradition points out the site of the house in which Lazarus lived, with Mary and Martha, his sisters. The location has been changed several times, and even now two sites are disputing the honor, one being supported by the Greeks and the other by the Roman Catholics. A little farther on is a ruined tower, which the guides call the Castle of Lazarus, but it was probably built during the period of the crusaders. A small mosque with a white dome has been erected over the sepulcher, for the Moslems as well as the Christians regard Lazarus as a saint and use the tomb as a place of prayer. This is common throughout all Palestine, and one is a little puzzled to understand why the disciples of Christ should be regarded with such reverence by the followers of Mohammed.

Before the Moslem conquest of Jerusalem in the seventh century churches and monasteries were erected by the Christians in Bethany upon the sites where Mary and Martha are supposed to have dwelt and where Lazarus was buried. These were afterward converted into mosques, and used by the Mohammedans until the crusaders obtained possession, when they were restored again to Christian worship. Melisinda, Queen of King Fulco, built a nunnery at Bethany in honor of Mary and Martha, and her sister





A BIT OF BETHANY.



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Iveta, a rich and proud woman, was made abbess. It is possible that the ruined tower may have been a part of that nunnery, but it is more likely that the crusaders built a castle there. The building was destroyed by the Saracens, and from that day Bethany has been a hopeless collection of huts. Although there may be doubt about the exact location of the house and the tomb, both were certainly somewhere in the village, for the Christian world has never lost sight of this humble retreat of Jesus. The earliest Christian converts lived in Bethlehem, and, although the population has been exterminated again and again, it has never been without His followers.

From Jerusalem to Hebron is a journey of four hours by carriage over a good road. Starting early in the morning and taking luncheon along, the trip may be made in a single day, and that is the best plan, as there is no hotel at Hebron. The only place where a man can sleep decently is at the Russian hospice, and that is objectionable for several reasons. So many pilgrims go there. The journey is not particularly interesting; the hills on either side of the trail are rugged and barren and the cultivated area is limited, but no city in Palestine except Bethlehem is more attractive for historical reasons. The manners and customs of the people, their costumes and dialect, have changed very little since Father Abraham came to dwell among the sons of Heth. This gives the town a quaintness and makes it a fascinating field of study.

There are several interesting places in Hebron, one of them being the grave of the prophet Jonah, and another, a rock tomb, which is said to have belonged to the prophet Gad. The spring at which Philip baptized the eunuch is pointed out, and several other scenes of



Scripture stories, but Hebron is so closely identified with Abraham and the early days of Israel that these points are generally overlooked.

The most conspicuous object and the shrine of the pilgrims is what the Arabs call the Haram Ramet el-Khalil—the Tomb of Abraham. It is a large structure, with high walls very well preserved, 220 feet by 159 feet in size. The stones are of great size, averaging 10 by 15 by 8 feet in dimensions, being laid without mortar and with the greatest exactness, the joints being so true and perfect that it is even now impossible to run a knife blade between them.

Here Abraham is supposed to have been buried, and excepting the tomb of Mohammed, and the black stone at Mecca, it is the most sacred place in all the Islam world, even more so than the Mosque of St. Omar. Here Abraham came to bury Sarah and to weep for her, and here Isaac and Rebecca also found eternal rest. But the grave of Esau is unknown. Here Jacob buried Leah, leaving the body of his beloved Rachel by the roadside near Bethlehem, and here his sons brought his weary bones out of Egypt and buried him by the wife who had deceived him.

That must have been one of the most remarkable funerals in all history, for we read that "all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house and all the elders of Egypt accompanied Joseph and his brethren, and they took with them their families and flocks and herds." It was a migration second only to the exodus of the Israelites, for "there went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and it was a very great company, and they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation."

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The place is partly in ruins now, but is being preserved by the Mohammedan moulahs, who are exceedingly jealous of Christian intrusion. The sepulchers are not shown to ordinary visitors, but baksheesh or a letter from the governor at Jerusalem will open the iron doors and give access to a cave which is evidently natural, and then to a second, which is partly natural, and then to a third, which has been enlarged by artificial means and contains an inscription reading, "This is the Tomb of our Father, Abraham, upon Whom be Peace."

The cenotaph, supposed to contain the dust of the patriarch, is similar to those built for the sultans and pashas in Turkey, and is covered with embroidered velvet, extracts from the Koran being traced with silver thread with exquisite skill. There are five other tombs, that of Sarah being in a recess at the right of Abraham's and guarded by a pair of gates. Those of Jacob and Leah are in a similar recess on the opposite side, and over them two great green banners are crossed, the significance of which was not explained. Several fine cashmere and camel's-hair shawls are folded across the cenotaphs that cover the remains of the other founders of the race of Israel, and they were presented by former sultans and other great men. No one is ever allowed to enter the recess where Isaac is buried, and that also is a mystery. It is said that when Ibrahim Pasha, the conqueror of Palestine and the dictator of Egypt, endeavored to approach the cenotaph of Isaac seventy-five or eighty years ago he was smitten with paralysis.

This is probably the oldest burial place in the world, and it is absolutely authentic because we know that Abraham purchased the cave of Macpelah as a family



tomb. We even know how much he paid for it. The walls around it are also among the oldest examples of masonry, dating from the time of the pyramids, and are of Jewish workmanship, which gives them increased importance.

The modern town of Hebron is not at all interesting. There are perhaps 20,000 people, nearly all Moslems excepting 1,500 Jews. There is an English physician and hospital and a German Lutheran mission, with a church and school for Mohammedans, but the work is carried on with a good deal of difficulty because of popular prejudice. The people are engaged in several extensive branches of industry and carry on a brisk trade with the Bedouins of the desert south and east. There are large glass manufactories of bottles and beads. The latter are sold to pilgrims at Jerusalem and to the natives to protect them from the evil eye. A lamp factory gives employment to 150 or 200 people. Nearly all the water bottles used in southern Palestine are made there of goat and pig skins, and many of the trinkets and religious souvenirs that pilgrims carry away are manufactured in Hebron, although Bethlehem does a larger business in that line. The town is not attractive. It is a mass of masonry, divided by narrow streets, with very little verdure, and water is scarce, but on the hillsides around are some of the most famous and most productive vineyards in Palestine.

Hebron is not only very old, but, unlike most of the towns, has never been destroyed or badly damaged. It has escaped the ravages of war, and perhaps some of its houses are more ancient than any others in the Holy Land, although there is no definite record or evidence of their age. We know that the present town



stands upon the same site occupied by the Hebron of Abraham because of a famous pool. A wall may crumble; a temple may be thrown down; a palace may be destroyed by fire and a castle razed by artillery, but a well cut in the living rock will endure forever, and the pool of Hebron is an unimpeachable witness. The townspeople depend upon it to-day as they always have done, and the same stone steps lead down to the water. Men, women and children are constantly coming and going with their burdens upon their heads as in the days of Abraham, but, as at Nazareth, the picturesqueness of the scene is much impaired because petroleum cans are very generally used as a substitute for the ancient artistic urns and jars.

Outside the city, an ancient oak, twenty-six feet in girth, and spreading its branches over an area ninety-three feet in diameter, the Mohammedan traditions say, is the same tree under which Father Abraham received the angel ambassadors from Jehovah, as he "sat at the door of his tent, in the cool of the day." Botanists question the accuracy of the tradition, for, while they admit that the tree may be a thousand years old, they are quite certain it is no older. Enough beads, crosses, rulers, paper cutters, book covers, albums, portfolios, writing desks, picture frames and other souvenirs have been manufactured out of the wood of this tree to load the entire fleet of the American Steamship Company, and several car loads are sold annually, although not a branch or a twig has been cut for a generation. Occasionally by a liberal use of baksheesh a tourist or a pilgrim may obtain a few leaves, but they, it is more likely than otherwise, were picked from a tree in an adjoining grove.

Beside the roadway, about a mile from town, are the

massive foundations of a large building, which inclose an area 200 by 160 feet. Only two courses of stone were ever laid. The work of construction seems to have stopped with them, and they are enormous blocks, measuring fifteen and eighteen feet in length by three and four feet square. They were laid in the same manner as those in the tomb of Abraham, without mortar, but with remarkable exactness, for the joints are absolutely perfect. Who did this work and the purpose for which it was intended nobody knows. There are no traditions attached to it, but the people call it "Abraham's house." They ought to realize, however, that Abraham never had a house. He was a nomad and lived in a tent.

Beersheba, or Bires Seba, is about thirty miles south of Hebron, but we did not go there, because there is nothing to be seen or learned and it is a hard ride across the desert. It is the southern extremity of Palestine, the jumping-off place—from Dan to Beersheba, they used to say in describing the limits of the kingdom of the Jews—but, as in olden times, it is an important station upon the caravan trail between Damascus and Cairo, and the neighborhood is sprinkled with ruins that are eloquent testimony of stirring events that have occurred in that neighborhood. There Abraham, Isaac and Jacob often dwelt; there Jacob played the trick for which his posterity have been punished, and acquired the birthright and blessing that belonged to his brother; there he sacrificed to the Lord before entering upon the desert on his way to visit his lost son Joseph in Egypt; there Samuel made his sons judges. Abraham once planted a grove at Beersheba, and the posterity of his trees still extend a grateful shade over the camel drivers



and the Bedouins, whose flocks sweep the plains around it.

Shiloh is about six hours' journey northward from Jerusalem, but the roads are so bad that you have to go on horseback. It is a desolate place, scattered with ruins, and one could scarcely conceive of a more degraded and hopeless lot of creatures than the Arab shepherds who now occupy the place where the pious Hannah and the great and good Eli used to live. But it is no modern ruin. Its destruction was proclaimed by Jeremiah: "Go ye now into my place, which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it, for the wickedness of my people Israel." The modern name is Seilun.

One might spend hours moralizing and sentimentalizing over these desolate piles of stone, for at one time Shiloh was the center of the worship of Jehovah. The tabernacle of God stood there from the time of Joshua to the days of Samuel, and all the tribes of Israel came there to worship. Hither the child Samuel was brought by his mother, according to her vow, when he was only three years old, to be lent to the Lord, and to be trained for the service of the sanctuary. Here poor, blind old Eli fell backward and broke his neck when they told him that the ark had been captured by the Philistines.

In the first chapter of the gospel according to St. Luke we learn that a blameless man and woman named Zacharias and Elizabeth were living in a city of Judea, "in the hill country," when Mary, the mother of Jesus, visited them. Elizabeth was her cousin. And shortly after a child was born of Elizabeth, and, according to the injunction of an angel, they called his name John, "and the hand of the Lord was with him,"



and his reputation was noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea. "And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the desert till the day of his shewing unto Israel. And the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness, and he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."

From the time of the crusades a thriving village called Ainkarim, about four miles south of Jerusalem and an equal distance west of Bethlehem, has been identified as the place "in the hill country" where these extraordinary events occurred, and in the latter part of the eighteenth century the Marquis de Nointel, ambassador to Turkey, persuaded the sultan to give the ruins of a church, then occupied as a stable, to the Franciscan fathers, who, in their energetic way, restored it as nearly as possible on the lines of the original erected by the crusaders; and they built a large monastery adjoining. This church, they believe, occupies the exact site of the house of Zacharias, in which Mary and Elizabeth exchanged maternal confidences, and John the Baptist was born.

In an old fortification at Medeba, in the mountains of Moab, about 3,000 feet above the level of the sea on the other side of the Jordan, and thirty-five miles southeast of Jericho, has been discovered a mosaic pavement, which is nothing less than a map of ancient Palestine. This map is made of small colored stones beautifully put together, and was undoubtedly the floor of some important room in a church or a monastery, and probably dates from the fifth, or perhaps the fourth, century, when the Byzantine art of decorating floors with mosaic flourished, and Medeba was in its

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glory. At present Medeba has a population of only 900 souls, mostly Christians, who are working industriously to restore the fertility of the wilderness of Moab.

The largest town upon the map is Jerusalem, and the churches of the Holy Sepulcher and St. Anne are plainly marked; also the columns on both sides of the street leading from the Damascus gate to the other side of the city—which to this day is called in Arabic Bab-Il Amood—the gate of the columns. The Jordan can be plainly distinguished upon the map. The fishes in it are almost as broad as the river itself. Toward its source a bridge appears to cross it, and on the farther side are a gazelle and a tiger, to indicate that the country was wild. There are two sailing boats in the Dead Sea almost as large as the sea itself, with two men in each pulling oars that touch the banks on both sides. Bethlehem, Hebron, Gaza, Askalon and other places can also be identified, and south of them is Egypt, with the Nile flowing through it, and, by its delta, reaching the sea. The names of all these places are marked in Greek. To the south of Jerusalem, on the Roman road leading to Hebron, is a place plainly marked: “Beth-Zakar, Home of the Holy Zacharias.”

An enterprising archeologist, at about the proper distance and direction from Jerusalem, discovered an old ruin called by the natives “Beit Shakkar.” The location and the similarity of the name attracted his attention, and particularly because a village called Safa, which lies only a little distance directly east, is also marked upon the mosaic map. This topographical evidence seemed to be convincing, and his excavations disclosed the ruins of an old church, with



arches and a vaulted roof resembling the representation upon the mosaic map. The church is twelve meters long and was once surrounded by immense buildings. The floor was laid in colored mosaics similar to those at Medeba, which is accepted as proof that both existed about the same time. A considerable part of the mosaic is still in a good state of preservation, and the design and colors are exquisite. A half-obliterated inscription in Greek characters appears in which the names of both John and Zacharias may be traced.

We left Jerusalem early in the morning, drove through the new part of the town and around the north side of the walls by a good road, past the Damascus gate, the site which General Gordon, like many others, believed was that of the crucifixion, dropped down the steep hill into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and followed the roadway by the Garden of Gethsemane and the Tomb of the Holy Virgin, around the breast of Mount Olivet. Once more we saw one of the several trees upon which Judas hanged himself, the barren fig tree that was cursed by Christ, the city slaughter-houses, the stone upon which the Virgin rested on her flight into Egypt, the place where Christ forgave Peter his sins, and other interesting spots where the Russian pilgrims kiss the ground, and were pestered out of all our patience by old men and old women and bright-eyed little children with dirty faces, who attacked us almost every foot of the way begging for baksheesh. The children would often run after the carriage until they were ready to drop from exhaustion, hoping that such exhibitions of patience and endurance would soften our hearts to the extent of a few pennies at least.

We followed the road that the Savior trod when he



went down to Jordan to be baptized. He made the journey in two days, barefooted, with nothing to protect His feet from the sharp stones and the thorns but a pair of rude sandals. He carried His food in a pouch upon His hip and slept in the shadow of the rocks by the roadside, or perhaps He may have spent the night at either of the two places between Bethany and Jericho where water and noonday shade may be found. One is known as the Apostle's Fountain, and a large stream gushes out of the rock. The other is The Inn of the Good Samaritan, where the stranger of whom Jesus tells us in the parable was taken after he was set upon by thieves.

As in New Mexico and Arizona, water is the most precious thing in Palestine, and the laws which protect springs and wells are very severe. Most of the wells are artificial. Rich men at great expense have chiseled basins and reservoirs out of the rocks to receive the flow from springs, and in many places where no springs could be found they have drilled through the limestone a hundred feet, and sometimes twice that distance, to the artesian basin. None but very rich sheiks could afford such an expenditure; nevertheless, they have not only been the greatest benefactors of their fellow men, but those who have sunk wells and built fountains have erected monuments to their fame more enduring than palaces or temples or shafts of granite. The Temple of Solomon has vanished forever, but the pools which he walled up with masonry and filled with water still remain. The wells that Abraham and Jacob drilled in the rock as acts of piety as well as power are as immortal as their names, and will live forever, as long as men feel thirst.

According to a just custom of the country, water

rights could never be forfeited. No man who owned a well might refuse a neighbor water for his family or his flocks, but the title of the spring was inviolate; no creditor or enemy could take water rights away from the owner. To injure or fill up a well was an unpardonable crime. When the Philistines threw earth and stones into the well of Abraham they intended to challenge him to a war of extermination. Those customs and regulations remain to-day.

The vineyards in this part of the country are very productive, particularly those along the valleys toward Hebron. For a long distance the sloping hillsides are covered with grapevines. The vine stocks are made to grow thick and stout by trimming them down to a height of four or five feet. Some are strong enough to stand alone, but when weighted with grapes it is necessary to put in props to support them, and that explains the presence of piles of short poles with notched ends in all of the vineyards. The sunny sides of the mountains are carefully terraced, often to the very summits, and, being far from the villages and without fences or other protections, they have to be guarded after the fruit gets ripe. The young men in the neighborhood act as watchmen in turn, both night and day. They take favorable points where they can survey the largest area, and so that the entire space planted to grapes may be kept under constant surveillance. In some of the vineyards towers are erected in order to extend the range of vision. The Bible speaks of these watch towers. When a destructive animal or a thief is seen, or any other cause of alarm appears, the watchman gives a peculiar prolonged cry, which is echoed by the other men on guard until it reaches the neighboring villages.



The wild country between Jerusalem and Jericho was formerly haunted by robbers, and they were none other than the sons of Ishmael and Esau, who fed their flocks upon the neighboring hillsides and were always upon the lookout for weak and unprotected travelers. But the outrages that frequently occurred a quarter of a century ago were stopped by placing the responsibility for protection of tourists and pilgrims upon Sheik Rasheed Arekate, the highest in rank of all the Bedouins in Palestine, a fierce fighter, who rules the Arabs in this vicinity without difficulty, and is less hampered in his autocracy even than the Sultan of Turkey, because the legislative, judicial and executive branches of his government are all in his own person; he exacts tribute from every merchant and traveler in his realm and is able to defy even the governor of the province. And why not? His ancestors have owned these deserts since the days of Ishmael.

Abraham made a great mistake when, to gratify the whim of a jealous woman, he cast Hagar and Ishmael adrift, for their sons have ever been a menace and terror to the rest of his family. It was the sons of Ishmael whom Balak called to help him against Israel. Their sheiks went with the elders of Moab to bring Balaam from "the farther east" to curse the people of Jehovah, and the last war undertaken by Moses was to avenge Jehovah upon Midian. For centuries the Arab tribes made unceasing raids upon the Israelites. Successive civilizations—Jewish, Assyrian, Greek, Roman, Christian, Saracenic, Turkish—have come and gone, but Ishmael's children have remained to harass them, and, as each retired, have swept their flanks as regularly and remorselessly as the surf of the sea.

The sons of Ishmael still herd their flocks upon the



pastures of Palestine, and are not only tolerated but are feared by the Turkish authorities, while the sons of Jacob are compelled to pay baksheesh for the privilege of living in the land that the Lord God gave to their fathers. The sons of Ishmael still extort blackmail from the farmers, and if it is withheld, destroy the harvests, as they did in the time of Samson and the Judges. Throughout eastern Palestine all classes of people pay tribute regularly to the Bedouin sheiks. It is called "brotherhood." The towns that pay promptly and regularly are the "sisters" of the tribes that make the demand. The government again and again has endeavored to stop it, but has finally found it easier to close its eyes and accept a percentage of the spoils.

There being no intervening barrier upon the great Arabian plateau, floods of human barbarians have swept back and forth across Palestine and have checked its development and destroyed its wealth. The Nomads, the sons of Esau, have had their bowl of porridge, but have not been identified with the glory or the greatness or the sufferings of the other branch of Abraham's family. And perhaps if Abraham had not driven Hagar from his tent; if Esau had not sold his birthright, we to-day might not have been called upon to pay tribute to Rasheed Arekate. He lives at Bethpage, midway between Jerusalem and Bethany, a man of great wealth and true Eastern hospitality. He has entertained kings and has escorted many distinguished tourists about Palestine. His house is the largest and the finest private residence in that part of the country and is adorned with souvenirs of their acquaintance. But Chief Rasheed is getting old and his three sons are taking his place. They are hand-



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some men, fine horsemen, with gracious manners, and a firm grip upon the rights and privileges that they will inherit from their father. It is their business to keep under control the Arab population in an area about as large as Ohio, to escort travelers from place to place and to collect fees for this service. There is a regular scale of prices arranged between Cook's Tourist Agency and Sheik Rasheed, but parties who are not in charge of Cook's guides are blackmailed according to their appearance or pretensions.

The oldest son of the sheik, and his probable successor, Chaleel Rasheed Arekate, was our escort. He joined us at Bethany and kept us in sight all day, riding by the side of the carriage occasionally and chatting pleasantly in English, for he was educated at the Protestant school in Jerusalem. He is a genial fellow and proved to be a very agreeable companion, although toward the end of the journey, when our dragoman came to settle with him, we discovered that he had mistaken us for millionaires and had placed a corresponding value upon his services. It is a species of blackmail, but is permitted by the government and tolerated by the public to keep the Bedouins quiet. Otherwise there would be continual disturbances, and it is better to pay a few dollars baksheesh than be robbed and perhaps murdered on the highway. Probably the Bedouins of His day suggested to Jesus the parable of the Good Samaritan, which was spoken in the temple court. It was the habit of Jesus to illuminate His discourses by illustrations of the every-day experience of the common people.

The first resting place on the journey to Jericho is at the Apostle's Spring, where the horses are watered and are given half an hour's rest. Here Cook's agency

has erected a pavilion for the accommodation of travelers and serves luncheon, coffee and other wet groceries to cheer and stimulate thirsty and tired pilgrims who pass that way. The Inn of the Good Samaritan, about ten miles farther on, is supposed to have stood there long before the days of the Savior, and to have served the same purpose as now. The present proprietor is a bustling young Arab, who talks English perfectly, and hurried around, serving coffee, chocolate, beer, brandies and sodas, sandwiches and other food, and sold photographs and curios at the same time. To tempt us he said he had some American biscuits, and brought out the tin. They were hard, dry and musty, and must have been in stock for several generations, but we learned afterward that they were a most profitable investment for him. It is his custom to offer them as tempting morsels with a homelike flavor to every American traveler that passes by. They are always rejected because they are unfit to eat, but are charged for in the bill and payment insisted upon. Our dragoman fought desperately to avoid payment, but it was no use. Although we only nibbled at two or three of the crackers, we were charged full price for the entire box. Other travelers that we talked with afterward had exactly the same experience. The rascal sells that box of biscuits several times every day during the tourist season, but, unfortunately, nobody ever takes it away. If the Inn of the Good Samaritan had not been so far, and if other duties and pleasures had not been calling us, we would have gone down there and seized it as an act of righteous retribution and to end his nefarious conspiracy against our fellow countrymen.

During the winter season, usually from October



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until June, a continuous procession of pilgrims is passing up and down the old Roman road between Jerusalem and Jericho. Contrary to the assertion of the plantation hymn, Jordan isn't at all a hard road to travel. It is the best we have seen in Palestine, although it is all downhill one way and all uphill the other. The pilgrims are mostly Russians. Very few come from any other country except France, and they are only scattering, while the Russians form a solid and almost unbroken stream, loaded down with heavy winter clothes, high boots with thick soles, big bags full of supplies, blankets, bedding and cooking utensils strapped to their backs. They are not agreeable company. They are too perspiring and odorous, and their long hair and beards are inhabited by unmentionable things. When they get weary they lie down in the middle of the road and sleep for a while. When they wake up they make a cup of tea, eat a few crusts and go on cheerfully. They always carry their own provender and cook their own meals, which are simple and consist only of tea, bread and dried fish. There is a popular notion that they eat candles, but I am assured it isn't true. All of them are peasants, but some are better off than others, having saved their earnings for years to make this pilgrimage, for if they can wash in Jordan it gives them a clear title to paradise, and, somewhere in his bundle, each one has a white robe for that purpose which he will keep for his shroud.

They think it is their duty to kiss every object of reputed sanctity. They bow and press their lips to the dusty earth because it was once trodden by the Savior's feet; they kiss the stones of the walls that surround the Garden of Gethsemane, and the rocks



upon which the Virgin Mother is said to have sat; they wear out the glass upon the pictures at the shrines by the pressure of their lips; they kiss the columns and pillars and even the thresholds of the churches. Their credulity surpasses belief. If one of their big-bearded monks should tell them that the Savior had crossed a certain stream every man and woman would instantly fall upon his or her knees and try to lap up the water with their tongues.

As the road runs down the limestone hills on the road to Jericho the country becomes more and more barren; the flocks of sheep and goats grow smaller and farther between. The herdsmen, who carry old-fashioned guns with long barrels inlaid with silver and stocks inlaid with mother-of-pearl, such as you see in the museums and curio stores, crouch in the shade and sit cross-legged, gazing stupidly at the carriages that pass by, and trample down the wild flowers, which seem to thrive where nothing else will grow—poppies, anemones, buttercups, forget-me-nots and the humble dandelion are everywhere, and mustard plants look like great yellow blotches on the hillsides. The hills are arid and gray. This is the “wilderness” that we read of in the Bible, and at the bottom of a precipitous, yawning gulf runs the brook Cherith, which you remember, was the home of Elisha the Tishbite, after he came across Jordan from Gilead, and half-way up the cliff is a Greek monastery clinging to the rocky walls, which is said to mark the place where he was fed by the ravens. I do not know that we saw the ravens that fed him, but they were very numerous along the roadway, and we are told that they live to a very great age.

We had to dismount from the carriage to relieve

the horses, because the road becomes dangerous, and so rough that the vehicle might be upset, and walk around the edge of a sharp promontory, where a view of the Dead Sea and the valley of the Jordan bursts upon us, just as Moses might have seen it from Pisgah. It is a long, gray strip of land, with a high wall of rugged mountains in the background. Those are the mountains of Moab through which Israel came from Egypt, although they seem impassable. The highest peak is Nebo, where Moses lies in an unknown grave. A little farther to the northward the second peak in elevation is called Pisgah, although the name is not known to the maps. A sheet of shining water, lying off to the southward and glistening like a new dollar, is the Dead Sea; a silver serpent that seems to be crawling along the brown earth is the Jordan, with a fringe of foliage here and there, while a green spot, so green as to be livid in contrast with the brownness of the rest of the landscape, is the ancient City of Jericho. There is said to be no landscape in all the rest of Palestine so grateful to the eye after riding all day among the desolate hills and through the rocky gorges, and we are told that this oasis in the desert is due to a single spring, illustrating what a little water will accomplish in a thirsty land.

In the mountains that lie between Jerusalem and the valley of the Dead Sea are only three trails that can be followed by human beings, and the shortest is about eight hours. It is the road over which we have come, and one of the oldest highways in the world. On the other side of Jordan, where the mountains of Moab loom up so stern and forbidding, was the land of Ruth and Naomi, who went to Bethlehem over this road. Moab is visible from Bethlehem, and when Ruth lifted



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her eyes from gleaning in the fields of Boaz, she could see the purple peaks of her native country.

The curious red streaks that appear in the rocks along the way are often pointed out to pilgrims as the stains of the blood of the martyrs. This road is called "the ascent of blood," although I cannot find out why, and during the crusades the Knights Templar built the Red Khan—the Castel Rouge, the French call it—for the protection of pilgrims on their way to the scene of the Savior's baptism in Jordan.

Looking northward we can see Gilead "on the other side of Jordan," but we cannot go there. It was too long and too hard a journey, with nothing particular to see except the scenes of perpetual strife. Gilead was a battleground for centuries. The Jews held it from the exodus to the Babylonian captivity, and it witnessed the noblest exhibitions of Hebrew heroism. Mizpah is in Gilead—the gathering place of Israel. David was the first of the kings to bring all eastern Palestine under supremacy, and so completely did he win the hearts of Gilead that when Absalom's rebellion broke out he sought refuge there, and there fought the battle of the woods, when Absalom was hanged by his long hair in an oak. Solomon did not command the affections of the people and could not control the country. During his reign Damascus grew in power and took much of it away from him, and the arrival of Pompey with his Roman legions in the year 64 B. C. closed Israel's domination.

That is a mysterious region "on the other side of Jordan." The mountains of Moab look like another part of the world, and are full of strange phenomena and freaks of nature. The young sheik Racheed, our escort, gave me a yarn about curious subterranean



towns, the most famous being called Edrei. A gorge winds around the southern boundary of the plain of Hauron, he says, and isolates the town on all sides except the south, where it can be approached on a level, but the citadel is completely cut off and leads to caves below which are impregnable. Racheed says they were chiseled out of the rocks by a race of giants. These caves are the wonder of the country, he says, and are divided into streets with the ruins of shops, factories and market places. The Bible does not mention them, but Racheed knows lots of things that are not mentioned in the Bible.

In the midst of the oasis that lies at our feet the hovels of modern Jericho sit upon the ruins of buried temples and palaces of the ancient city, which some day, as soon as the Great Turk is reasonable, may be excavated by archeologists and disclose important historical facts. You remember that the walls of the old town fell at the sound of Joshua's trumpets, and they still lie where they fell, but upon them arose another city, a city of palaces, built by Herod the Great, who lived and died in its gardens of oranges, dates and pomegranates. At one time he gave it as a gift to Cleopatra, who was his mistress before she met Mark Antony. Its great towers and gates are described in glowing terms in the history of the Roman occupation. There were a theater, a circus, a university and many artistic beauties that were borrowed of Greece.

That was the Jericho which Jesus entered one morning with a caravan, but He did not remain in the wicked city. He stopped with Zacchæus, the man who, being short of stature, climbed a tree like General Wheeler at the battle of Santiago, in order that he might see the New Prophet over the heads of the

crowd. Zacchæus was an official of the government, like Matthew, a collector of taxes for the Roman authorities, and therefore was abhorred by the Jews. And when Jesus called him to come down from the tree and asked to be his guest the multitude murmured as they might do if President Roosevelt would decline the hospitality of the Union League Club and go to dinner with a Chicago alderman.

The Jericho to-day is a collection of wretched cabins, inhabited by a peculiar people, who are unlike any others in Palestine, being a sort of mixed race and very depraved in character. There are several good hotels and hospices for the accommodation of pilgrims, a big Russian church, and the sheik's residence—a square house of stone, which, tradition says, stands upon the spot where Zacchæus lived.

To lighten the carriage we leave our luggage at the hotel and drive on to a fine spring of fresh water, which was turned from bitter to sweet by the prophet Elisha. He sprinkled it with a "cruse of salt," and ever since it has irrigated a large and fertile section of Jordan's valley, as he promised them it should. "And he went forth unto the spring of water and cast the salt in there and said: 'Thus said the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from henceforth any more death or barren land.' "

There is an eating and drinking place under a canvas awning, and you can sit down and rest awhile and look at the spring and think, but not long, because the restaurant keeper will insist upon trying to sell you curios.

Rising above you is a sharp bluff about 4,000 feet from the Jordan, which is claimed to be the Mount of Temptation where Satan took the Savior and offered



Him the whole world, which was spread out before them. I cannot quite understand that story. The view from the top of that mountain is one of the most desolate and repulsive in all the world, and Satan could not have tempted the poorest and humblest man with 1,000,000 square miles of it. But all the sects in the Eastern world believe in the place, and have believed in it from the beginning, and the mountain is filled with the ruins of old monasteries, old tombs, the towers of forsaken hermitages, where anchorites and saints came centuries ago and imitated the Savior by fasting and prayer, first exorcising the Great Tempter and other evil spirits.

At one time it was the fashion for penitents and people seeking absolution for their sins to desert their homes and take refuge in the cheerless caverns of this mountain, there to live and die, and some of the caverns are strewn with human bones awaiting the resurrection. St Louis, the King of France, spent several months there once, and kept Lent on the very spot where he supposed that the Lord was tempted.

Jericho was once called the City of Palms, but there are no palms here now. The last was seen by Rev. Dr. Robinson in 1838. The city was formerly the center of a large trade and shipped dates and other fruits to all parts of the world, but now everything that is eaten at the hotels has to be brought down from Jerusalem. The Saracens introduced sugar culture into the valley of the Jordan, but the crusaders destroyed the plantations and mills, and the industry has never been revived.





XXV

The Jordan and the Dead Sea





## XXV

### THE JORDAN AND THE DEAD SEA

The Jordan is unique among rivers. There is no other like it on the surface of the globe, and its physical peculiarities are many and striking. Thousands of streams are more beautiful and useful, but none has ever attracted so much attention or is so universally known to mankind. To half the universe this ugly, muddy stream is a symbol of the frontier between the known and the unknown worlds, separating the pilgrims and the saints, the labor and the rest, the cross and the crown, the toil and the glory of the soul. It flows 160 miles through a deep fissure in the earth that is from two to fifteen miles broad, and rapidly drops from the limestone cliffs of Lebanon into the Dead Sea, 1,292 feet below the level of the neighboring Mediterranean. The valley of the Jordan is filled with silt washed by heavy rains from the surface of the adjacent mountains, whose naked cliffs stick out of the soil like the bony elbows of a beggar. The water is clear and green where it leaves the Sea of Galilee; an Arab poet has called it a gigantic green serpent, but it isn't green very long; it gathers soil along its journey until it becomes a thick solution of clay, the color of chocolate, even darker than the waters of the Missouri River.

Between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea the Jordan plunges over twenty-seven cascades and rapids and falls a thousand feet, more than any other known

river except the Sacramento in California. These rapids gave it its name, for Jordan means literally "the down-comer." In March and April, when the warm spring sun melts the snows in the mountains, there is always a flood which inundates the valley, but seldom does any injury because there is nothing to injure.

Jordan is one of the crookedest rivers known. In covering a distance of sixty miles, for that is the length of a straight line drawn on the map between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea, it runs 212 miles because of the multiplications of its windings, and its length varies because of frequent changes in the course which it carves for itself in the soft and barren soil. The clay of its banks makes good brick material, and Solomon used it in the construction of the temple, but there is very little demand for it at present. Few buildings are being erected in Palestine these days, and stone is very cheap.

The actual stream between the two lakes varies from sixty to one hundred feet in width and from six to twenty feet deep at a normal stage of water, but in midsummer, during the dry season, it can be crossed in several places by a man with ordinary boots. Where it is widest the banks and the bottom are mud; where it is narrowest they are rock. The immediate valley will average eight miles in width, and, on the east side, is shut in by a range of mountains covered with forests and forbidding plains of naked desert, while on the other side, toward the Mediterranean, are broken ranges of hills intersected by fertile valleys.

Evidences of volcanic action are frequent—masses of lava and bitumen are disclosed at several places, hot springs that burst out of the hillsides, twisted strata of rock that appear to have been involved in some ter-



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rible cataclysm, and the ruins of cities that have been destroyed by earthquakes. Geologists say that the entire country which surrounds the Jordan was once filled with water from which the granite peaks of Sinai, Hermon and the Lebanons alone protruded. Under pressure the limestone bed rose above the water in long folds running north and south. This was caused by contraction in the cooling of the earth's crust, and these folds are now the ranges of hills on either side of the river. Had the two folds of limestone risen independently, an arm of the Red Sea would to-day wash the feet of Lebanon, but a diagonal ridge rose with them which not only shut out the Red Sea, but shut in a large quantity of salt water, which by climatic changes continued to evaporate until it was reduced to the present dimensions of the Dead Sea. It would doubtless continue to diminish were it not fed by the springs of the mountains and the Jordan.

Although the course of the river is marked by rank vegetation useless for human purposes, the depth of its channel and the valley in which it flows prevent the waters from escaping like those of other rivers to fertilize the adjacent plains. They cannot be used for irrigation without an enormous expenditure of money for pumps, reservoirs and other artificial auxiliaries. Several of its tributaries, however, can be tapped, and wherever water can reach the soil, vegetation is luxurious. The high temperature makes the valley a natural hothouse. Swamps abound and there is much malaria. The entire region is unhealthful, and is affected with innumerable insect pests. Dead driftwood and snags obstruct the channel—large trunks of half-decayed trees with their roots exposed, which have been washed out by the floods but are too big to float any



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farther. The entire valley is uninviting, unwholesome and almost uninhabited. It resembles the Bad Lands of South Dakota, with the Jordan as the Little Missouri River. The trees are tamaracks, willow, bamboo and greasewood, while mustard and sage brush abound in the plains. Camels like the sage brush, but neither goats nor donkeys will eat it. There are a few catfish in the Jordan; "fish with long black whiskers," was the way in which the dragoman described them.

Jordan valley was never densely populated, although Jericho was once a flourishing place, and we read in the Bible of "the cities of the plain." The "Zionists," who are trying to re-people Palestine with Jews, talk fluently of the possibility of establishing large and profitable colonies in this unnatural and repulsive sink, and publish plausible estimates of the amount of sugar that can be produced upon the banks of the Jordan; but they fail to consider certain conditions. The Sultan of Turkey has a private estate about midway between Galilee and the Dead Sea, where he raises sugar, cotton, rice and dates, by soldier labor, but he is the only successful planter in the entire valley. No employer without his despotic power can induce workmen to stay in a region where the summer heat is intolerable, ranging from 104 to 118 degrees daily in the shade, where mosquitoes and other insect pests are often unendurable, and where poisonous miasma fills the atmosphere.

Modern inquirers will always be mystified as to how people crossed the Jordan in early times. There are occasional fords, but the abrupt muddy banks are difficult to climb, and the lower the water the greater the difficulty. The shallowest ford, at the mean height of the water, is never lower than one foot, and

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the changes of course are so frequent that sometimes a traveler has to cross three or four streams in the place of one. In olden times, therefore, it used to be an excellent military boundary. To Israel the crossing was as great a crisis as that of the Red Sea, and several passages in the Old Testament show how great a gulf of separation the Jordan was with its jungles, its muddy banks and rapid current.

Until the Romans came there were no bridges across the Jordan. Bridges are not once mentioned in the Bible, not even in the New Testament, although the Romans, who were great bridge builders, must by that time have erected many in the country. Herod was an unceasing builder of palaces, temples, castles, theaters and other public buildings, and bridged the Jordan several times, but only two bridges over the Jordan now remain in a distance of 212 miles, which is a disgrace to the Turkish government. Some commentators upon the Bible believe that the Israelites had ferry boats; others suggest that they made use of inflated sheepskins.

The heathen races in Palestine used to curse Jordan with contempt, but to the Hebrews it was always a holy river. When Elisha told Naaman, the leper, to go and wash in Jordan it was considered the height of absurdity. John the Baptist selected its solitude for the theater of his ministry, and baptized Jesus there to emphasize the simplicity and asceticism which the former taught. The exact spot where Jesus was baptized can never be located, although we know it was in the wilderness of the desert plain, on the east side of the river, where "John was baptizing beyond Jordan." This locality has never been inhabited except by hermits for ascetic seclusion, and therefore



there are no traditions to trace. And we know it was from the same wilderness that Jesus was "led up" by the spirit into the Mount of the Temptation.

Of course the guides would not fail to select a proper place. As usual the Greeks have one and the Roman Catholics another, both equally authentic, and the guides lead the pilgrims so that they may enter the water precisely where Jesus did. Some of the pilgrims usually become hysterical, singing, shouting and praying, strip themselves naked before they reach the water and plunge into the muddy current without considering its depth and other dangers, to be cleansed of their sins, for spiritual absolution is promised to all who make the pilgrimage. Most of them, however, undress leisurely, men and women together without regard to the laws of propriety, and clothe themselves in the white shrouds which they bring with them and afterwards keep for their winding sheets.

The water is about four feet deep at the place where the Greeks think Jesus was baptized and where most of the pilgrims go. The banks are very steep and muddy, so that the cleansing process is entirely theoretical. No person can get in or get out of the water without becoming thoroughly covered with mud. There are no bath-houses, although the priests might easily erect them; no planks, no grass, and no shelter of any kind. The best that can be done is to spread a blanket on the mud and use that for a dressing-room. The excuse given for not building bathing-houses is the expense of lumber, but the Greeks make immense amounts of money from the pilgrims, and it would cost comparatively little to put up a few cheap sheds and provide floats and stairs by which people could descend into the water decently.



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Intelligent men and women often come all the way from Europe, and occasionally from the United States, to be baptized in Jordan. They tell of rich men who not only come themselves, but bring clergymen with them for the purpose of performing the ceremony. Others induce missionaries in Jerusalem to come down and dip or sprinkle them, and are willing to pay a large fee for the service. Some are prompted merely by sentiment; others are under the delusion that there is a special saving grace in the waters and that the act of immersion in a stream where the Savior of Men was baptized will wash away any amount of sin.

Tin cans, shaped like the canteen of a soldier, are provided for tourists who wish to carry Jordan water back home with them, but they are cautioned that it is necessary to boil and filter it before sealing the bottle, or they will find it very foul at the end of their journey. Not only mud, but all kinds of filth are carried in solution, and myriads of microbes.

The place where the Israelites crossed the Jordan is pointed out with great confidence by the guides, and the archeologists of the Palestine Exploration Society have identified the modern village of Tell Kefrein, on the east side, with Abel-Shittim, the place where the Israelites pitched their last camp before crossing into the Land of Promise. Here, according to Josephus, Moses completed the Book of Deuteronomy, and under the shade of a group of palm trees which still decorate the summit of a mound, he delivered his last address to the children of Israel. From this encampment went out the two military expeditions which subdued Gilead and Bashan, and enabled the two and a half tribes to occupy peacefully their chosen inheritance upon that side of the river. The ford at which

the other tribes crossed is believed to be within the immediate vicinity, perhaps three or four miles up or down the stream, but thoughtful men hesitate about accepting any particular spot, because of the frequent changes in the channel.

Somewhere, but no man can determine the spot, Moses, the great leader and law-giver of Israel, stood and gazed upon "the land which he was to see with his eyes, but was not to go in thither." It might have been upon any one of several high peaks among the mountains of Moab. Nebo is bold, barren and rugged, but is not strictly "over against Jericho," although, perhaps, three-fourths of the entire area of Palestine, including Jerusalem and the Sea of Galilee, are visible from its summit. The name Pisgah has never been known to the Bedouins who inhabit this country. It appears only in the Bible and was evidently a figure of speech. Nebo was named in honor of a pagan deity, whose altars may still be found upon its summit. Some authorities believe that Nebo and Pisgah were perhaps the same mountain, where the sacred story of Moses was brought to a close, and where the mighty hosts, numbering between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 of people, whom he had guided through the wilderness and across the deserts for forty years, saw the promised land spread out before them; and somewhere in the gorges cut by the merry streams that plunge over its rocky walls, where no other human foot has trodden, there his body was laid.

"And Moses died in the mount whither he had gone up, and he was gathered unto his people, as Aaron, his brother, had died on Mount Hor, and was gathered to his people. He died in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord, and he buried him in a



ravine in the land of Moab before Beth-peor, but no man knoweth of his sepulcher to this day."

In spite of this positive and definite assertion, the Mohammedans have erected a rude mosque upon a promontory overlooking the Dead Sea, which they call "The Tomb of the Prophet Moses," and they have named a group of springs near by "The Fountains of Moses," because, according to their traditions, he rested and refreshed himself there until Jehovah summoned his spirit. These places are so sacred that Christians are not permitted to approach them, and during the spring months of each year thousands of Mohammedan pilgrims find their way to worship the alleged sepulcher of the Hebrew hero with demonstrations of a remarkable character. Both shrines are controlled by whirling dervishes, and it is claimed that monks of this order who become insane, as they often do by fasting and by the violence of their muscular exertions at worship, are confined there and are released only upon a certain day of the year—the anniversary of the death of Moses, according to their calendar.

Rasheed, our Bedouin escort, says that these stories are true, and he describes the fountains of Moses and the scene of his sepulcher as a most beautiful natural park extending over a ledge of limestone that is carpeted with moss, shaded by enormous pines and illuminated by thick masses of flowering oleanders. Four perpetual springs are the source of a stream which plunges over a steep declivity and forces its way to the Dead Sea.

Mount Sinai is fourteen days' journey by camel caravan southward, upon a peninsula extending into the Red Sea, and surrounded by an irredeemable desert.



The Dead Sea is about four miles from Jericho. There is no road; there are no bridges, but during the dry season a wagon may cross the barren plain almost anywhere, for it is like the Bad Lands of Dakota, except that the surface is coated with salt and gypsum instead of alkali. During the rainy season it is impassable. When the soil is saturated with water it sticks to the wheels and makes them so heavy that no team can haul them. There are several camel trails, which are usually followed by the drivers because they lead around the heads of the gulches that the heavy rains have washed in the soft soil, but a camel usually is a poor pathfinder, and the unnecessary distance covered by their trails would exasperate an American frontiersman.

There is no water upon the plain in the dry season, but in the rainy season the gulches are roaring turrents, for they carry the drainage of the mountains into the Jordan. A few trees are scattered along the bed of the river, and occasional bunches of greasewood, sage and mustard upon the plain. A Greek monastery, with a stately dome, marking the place where John the Baptist is said to have had his abode in the wilderness and where he lived on locusts and wild honey, is the only human habitation. The only other shelter is a hut built of mud and driftwood on the beach, where the carriages of tourists usually come to the water and where the only boat that plies the Dead Sea makes its landing.

The hut is occupied by two or three disreputable looking Arabs, who were winnowing wheat that morning in the old-fashioned way. The boat had brought a couple of bags of grain from the other end of the sea and left it with them. They spread their cotton cloaks



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upon the gravel and threw the wheat by shovelfuls into the air. The kernels fell upon the mantles, while the breeze carried the chaff over toward the water. By repeating this process three or four times they managed to get the grain fairly clean.

The Dead Sea occupies a sink inclosed on three sides by precipitous and barren mountains. On the Moab shore they rise to the height of 3,500 feet, on the Jerusalem side to 2,500 feet, and touch the water in two places, being cut by rocky gorges. The Dead Sea is almost the shape and dimensions of Lake Geneva in Switzerland, being forty-seven miles in length and nine and a half miles wide at the widest part. Near the center it is less than two miles wide. At the northeast corner, not far from the mouth of the Jordan, soundings show a depth of 1,310 feet. From there southward the bottom shelves rapidly upward, and at the southern extremity the water is only eight or twelve feet deep. The mean depth is 1,080 feet. The variation in depth during the year is often as much as twenty feet, according to the rainfall. The normal level below that of the Mediterranean is 1,292 feet; the total depth of the depression below the level of the Mediterranean is 2,603 feet. Jerusalem is 2,494 feet above the Mediterranean and 3,786 feet above the Dead Sea.

Scientific observation justifies the estimate that a daily average of 6,500,000 tons of water is received into the sea from the Jordan and other sources during the year. During the rainy season the amount is very much greater; during the dry season it is, of course very much less, but this average will be maintained year after year. There is no outlet and the level is kept down by evaporation only, which is very rapid

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because of the intense heat, the dry atmosphere and the dry winds which are constantly blowing down from the gorges between the mountains. This evaporation causes a haze or mist to hang over the lake at all times, and, when it is more rapid than usual, heavy clouds form and thunderstorms sometimes rage with great violence in the pocket between the cliffs, even in the dry season. A flood of rain often falls upon the surface of the water when the sun is shining and the atmosphere is as dry as a bone half a mile from the shore. The mountains around the Dead Sea are rarely seen with distinctness because of this haze.

The waters of Jordan, when they reach the sea, are as brown as the earth through which they flow—a thick solution of mud—but the instant they mingle with the salt water of the lake the particles of soil are precipitated, and they become as clear as crystal, with an intensely green tint. Carrying so much soil and having so swift a current, one would suppose that the sea would be discolored for a considerable distance, but it is not so. The discoloration is remarkably slight. The Jordan has quite a delta at its mouth, breaking into a number of streams and frequently changing its course because of the obstructions brought down by its own current.

All the streams which feed the Dead Sea are more or less impregnated with sodium, sulphur and other chemicals, hence it contains an unusual quantity, at least 26 per cent, of solid substance. Seven per cent of this is common salt, 6 per cent is chloride of magnesium, which gives the water its nauseous and bitter taste, and 5 per cent is chloride of calcium, which makes it feel smooth and oily to the touch. There are several other ingredients in smaller quantities. The



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water boils at 221 degrees Fahrenheit. Its specific gravity varies from 1,021, where it receives the discharge of fresh water from the Jordan, to 1,256 at the southern part, near a ledge of rock salt. Salt has been collected and sold in the neighboring cities from the earliest times, and is considered particularly strong.

At the bottom of the lake are large beds of asphalt, and the surrounding soil is rich in bituminous matter. Small lumps of bitumen, which is solidified petroleum, frequently float upon the surface and may be picked up among the gravel on the shores. At the southeast corner is a ridge of pure rock salt five miles long and 300 feet high. A pillar that rises beside it is pointed out to tourists as the remains of Lot's wife. This deposit of fossil salt is said to contain a higher percentage of chloride of sodium than is found elsewhere. The bottom of the lake in that vicinity is covered with large crystals, so hard as to defy solution except in boiling water.

Nevertheless, the water of the Dead Sea is not the saltiest water in the world, as is generally supposed. Ocean water contains 4 per cent salt, the Dead Sea 26 per cent, the great Salt Lake of Utah 14 per cent in the rainy season and 22 per cent in the dry season; Lake Elton, on the Kirglin Steppes of Siberia, east of the Volga River, 29 per cent, and Lake Urumia, in Persia, is said to contain from 28 to 32 per cent. The latter is strongly impregnated with iodine also.

The water of the Dead Sea is very nauseous. No stomach is strong enough to retain it. It is sticky to the touch, and, when dried, leaves a coating of salt and other chemicals upon the flesh of bathers. But it is a beautiful blue color, and so transparent that one



can distinguish objects upon the bottom at a depth of twenty feet. It is difficult to swim in because of its buoyancy. A human body floats without exertion, and can only be submerged by an effort. Swimming is unpleasant, as the feet, being the lighter part of the body, have too great a tendency to rise to the surface. The sea is usually perfectly calm. The water is so heavy that it requires a strong wind to disturb it.

Fish placed in the Dead Sea gasp a few times and die, and the only living things that exist in the water are a few microbes, the bacilli of tetanus, which have been discovered in the north bank. The popular supposition that poisonous exhalations arise from its surface is a mistake. Birds fly over it without injury, and no baneful effects are suffered by breathing the atmosphere. On the contrary, consumptives and other persons of delicate health have found the air healing and stimulating, notwithstanding the great heat, and frequently camp out upon the shores. At one time several colonies of hermits lived upon the shores, and within a century penitents have come here to die among its repulsive surroundings. There were formerly several boats plying the waters, bringing merchandise from the opposite shores to Jericho, and for the accommodation of tourists. At present there are but two, and one of them, a small steamer recently brought over in sections from Alexandria by the abbot of the Orthodox Greek church at Jerusalem for excursion purposes, is laid up under a prohibition from the governor of the province, who has not received the amount of baksheesh to which he thinks himself entitled.

A great deal of mystery and superstition attached to the Dead Sea in olden times, much of which was dis-

sipated by a thorough exploration made by Capt. W. F. Lynch, an American naval officer, who was sent over by the Palestine Exploration Society of New York in 1848. His report has ever since been regarded as the highest authority on all questions, although several points are still disputed. Certain passages of Scripture can be reconciled to the physical conditions that exist to-day only upon the theory that the climate and topography have changed in a radical and remarkable manner. According to the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, there was already a salt sea here in the days of Abraham; the valley of Siddin, as it was called, "was full of slime pits," and somewhere in this awful and uninhabitable region was the scene of God's most terrible punishment of human sins. The glare of the fire and brimstone that rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah still illuminates this repulsive plain.

When Abraham and Lot looked down from the mountain of Bethel (which is not satisfactorily identified), the valley of the Jordan was "well watered everywhere as the garden of the Lord, and like unto the land of Egypt." The longing eyes of Moses gazed from Pisgah over a landscape of beauty and delight; at the temptation of Jesus the plain of Jericho was covered with fertile fields where now are banks of naked, lifeless clay, bearing no vegetation but grease plants and sage brush.

From no point of view that could have been occupied by Abraham, Moses or Jesus, does the valley of the Jordan appear anything but a desolate waste of mud.

There were once five cities—Sodom, Gomorrah, Adnah, Zeboiim and Zoar—but no man can tell where they stood. Their ruins have entirely disappeared,



and careful investigation has demonstrated that the popular idea that Sodom and Gomorrah lie at the bottom of the Dead Sea is a mistake. It is also a mistake to suppose that any community of size ever existed in this climate, where now no man can live.

Just how the Lord "overthrew the cities" is not disclosed either by Scriptural history or the evidences of nature, or the appearance of ruins. The inquisitive explorer can gain no light from any of these three usually reliable sources. The great difference in level between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea has often been cited as evidence that they were submerged by the sinking of the surface of the earth, and it has often been suggested that a flood might have followed an earthquake or the eruption of a volcano; but geologists are confident that no active volcanoes have ever existed in this vicinity, and that the subsidence of the Jordan Valley occurred in the tertiary period, which was ages before it could have been inhabited by men. They hold that this pocket in the mountains was a reservoir in the first ice age, when, as the testimony of the rocks in the adjacent mountains proves, the water level was some 3,000 feet higher than at present and at a greater elevation even than the surface of the Mediterranean.

It is also perfectly clear from the Scriptures that the catastrophe which overtook the five cities upon the plain was not from water, but from fire, and the absolute disappearance of all traces of walls that must have been built of stone, because there was no timber, is of itself a remarkable phenomenon. This is, perhaps, the only place in Palestine where the Bible student is utterly bewildered because of the contradictions between the land and the Book.



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On a cliff overhanging the Dead Sea a pile of ruins marks the scene of one of the most desperate and terrible tragedies that ever occurred in human history. Masada, or Sebbah, as it is called to-day, is an immense rock half a mile long and a quarter of a mile broad, hewn out of the mountain to which it belongs and twisted by some awful convulsion of nature. It is inaccessible except by winding paths which were chiseled out of the rock and are so narrow that men climb only in single file. Upon its surface Jonathan Maccabeus built a fortress, a castle, a palace, a chapel and other buildings and surrounded them with a high wall, with handsome gateways. Herod the Great occupied it with his bride, Mariamne, in the year 42 B. C. and decorated the palace in a most luxurious manner. He paved the courtyards with mosaics of many colors. The designs can still be traced. He hewed cisterns out of the rock for a water supply and caverns for wheat, wine, dates and other food. Stores which he sealed up in these caverns were found in good condition many centuries later.

In 70 A. D., when Jerusalem fell, the garrison fled here and was besieged by the Romans. Flavius Silva, one of the generals of Titus, laid the road which we followed down the mountains, extended it across the plain and over it he brought siege engines. He built up banks of stone, level with the edge of the rock, upon which he placed battering rams, and after several years' siege succeeded in making a breach in the walls. Rather than submit to capture the garrison killed each other. Ten men were drawn by lot to fall upon the rest, and slew each other after they set fire to the palaces and other buildings. The last man did not die until he saw flames burning fiercely. Then he

fell upon his own sword. When the Romans searched the town after its destruction they found a half-crazed woman and five children still alive, the only survivors of a population of several thousand.

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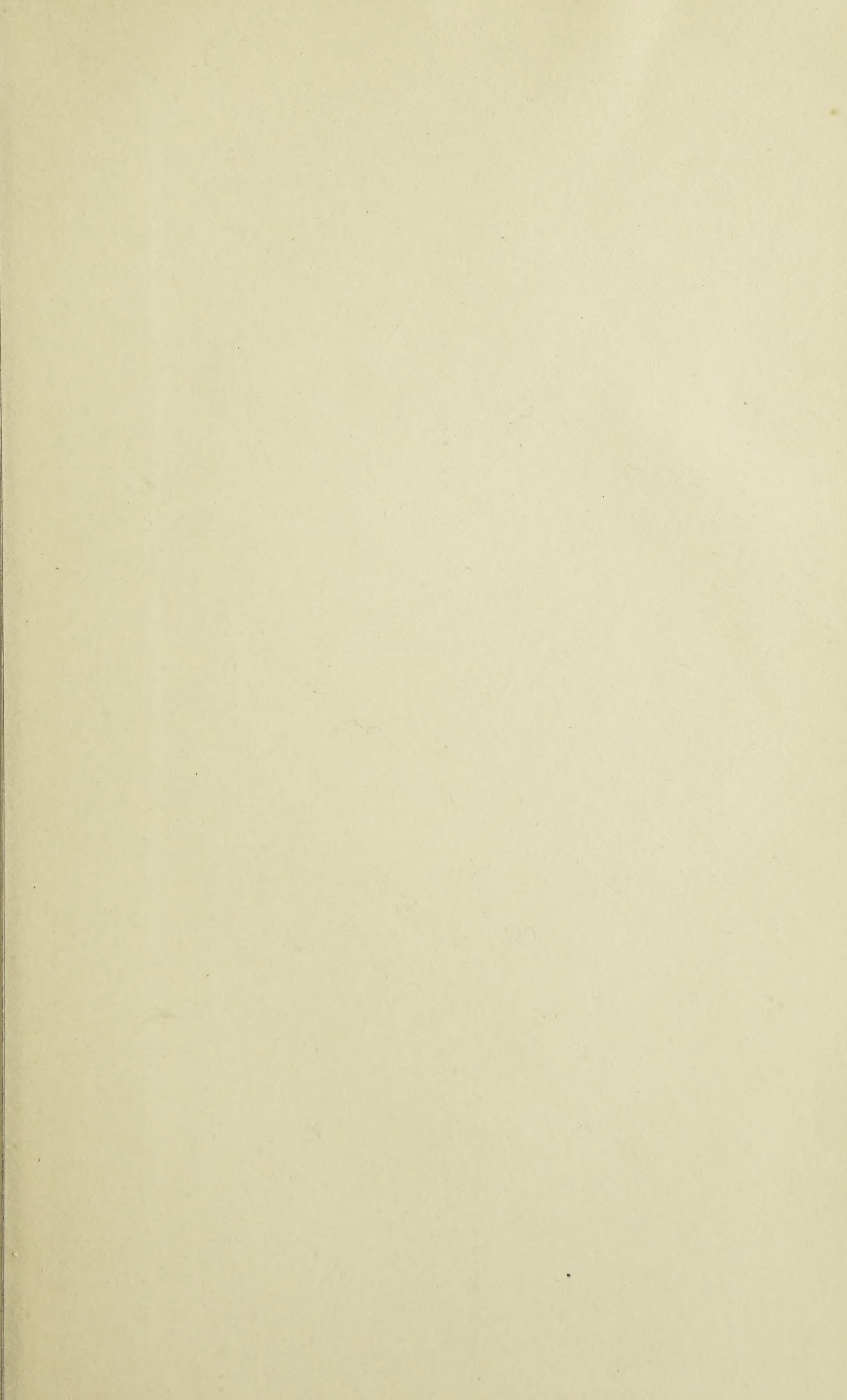
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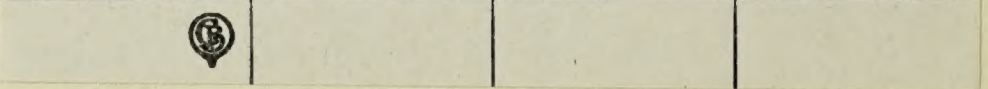




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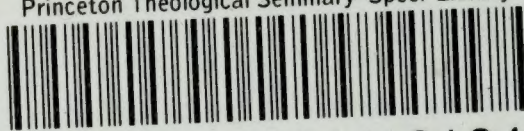






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